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MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE.

VOLUME LXVIII.

OCTOBER, 1919, TO JANUARY, 1920.

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MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

OCTOBER, 1919

Vol. LXVIII NUMBER 1

The Last Straw*

THE WINNING OF A GOOD WOMAN IN THE BAD LANDS

By Harold Titus

Author of "I Conquered," "Bruce of the Circle A," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

THE last patches of snow, even in the most secluded gulches, had been licked up by the mounting sun, the waters of Coyote Creek had returned to the confines of the stream-bed, in some places a suggestion of green was making its appearance about the bases of grass clumps, and cottonwood buds were swelling.

Four men sat on the bench before the bunk-house of the H. C. Ranch. One was braiding a belt, another whittling, and two more, hats over their eyes to shield them from the brilliant light, joined in the desultory conversation from time to time.

In the pauses, such as the one now prevailing, was something besides the spirit of idling. Dad Hepburn, gray of hair, eye, and mustache, but with the body of a young man, who sat nearest the doorway, glanced frequently toward the road, as if expecting to see another come that way to bring fresh interest. Two-Bits Beal was uneasy, and did not remain long in one pose, as men do who sit in the first real warmth of spring for its own sake. Jimmy Oliver, the whittler, stopped now and then and held his head at an angle, as if listening; and although he worked industriously at the belt, it was evident that Tom Beck had thought for other affairs.

"So she was his nephew an' only heir," commented Two-Bits gravely.

Hepburn stirred and snorted softly. Jimmy Oliver looked at the homely, freckle-blotched face of the gaunt speaker and grinned.

"Two-Bits, for a smart man you know less than anybody I ever encountered," Tom Beck said. "When I first set eyes on you I said to myself, 'That man ain't real. He's no work of God A'mighty.

* Copyright, 1919, by Harold Titus

"I'M MR. BEAL," HE SAID WEAKLY. "DON'T YOU BELIEVE THAT!" LAUGHED HEPBURN. "THAT'S TWO-BITS. HE AIN'T ENTITLED TO ANY FRILLS"

Some of these *hombres* that draw cartoons for newspapers got him up.' But I thought you must have brains, seein' you're so powerful low on looks. You're a good cow-hand an' a first-rate horse handler, but won't you ever get anything in your head but those things? Or did this cartoonist make a mistake an' put your kidneys in your skull? Niece—*niece*. Not nephew!"

"Have it your way," Two-Bits said in his high voice, swallowing so that his immense Adam's apple shot up half the ex-

traordinary length of his lean throat toward his pointed chin, and slipped back again with a jerk. "I was half right, wasn't I? She's his only heir, ain't she? You wouldn't ask a man to be more 'n half right, would you?"

"If his heir 'd been a nephew instead of a niece, we wouldn't all be settin' here so anxious about this arrival," opined Jimmy. "An' we wouldn't all be wonderin' if we was goin' to work for a squaw outfit. It 'll be a relief when this lady lands in our midst. Mebby there'll be less speculatin' an' more work done."

"You're right," assented Dad. "There's a lot to do."

Tom Beck began to whistle softly. The older man glanced sidewise at him uneasily, then fixed his eyes on the road.

"I'll bet two bits," volunteered Two-Bits, "that she's as homely as Tom claims I am, an' about as pleasant as a hod full of bumblebees."

No one demonstrated interest in his offer, and Beck said, as if he had not even heard it:

"Seems to me there's been a lot goin' on lately, Dad. Or did you mean there was a lot *more* to do?"

"I don't remember such awful activity," the other replied. "Course there's been—"

"Nobody ever located those four mares an' their colts, did they? An' the last we heard about that bunch of white-faces they was headed towards Utah with a shod horse trailing 'em."

Hepburn changed what started as an impatient expostulation into a sharp sigh, and relieved himself by stabbing a spur into the hard ground.

"Yes, there has been stealin'," he admitted. "There's been a lot of it. But who could do anything? The old man had been slack for years, an' in the last months before the end he just let go entire. He wouldn't even give anybody else authority enough to have any say; didn't even have a foreman. That's why horses an' cattle have been stole from him. Course there's been more devil to pay since he died than went on before; but when a man leaves things in a lawyer's hands, an' the lawyer won't even look in on the job, what you goin' to do?"

His manner was as benevolent as it was deliberate, and he turned a paternal smile on Beck.

"Let the thievin' go merrily on, I expect," the other said, giving the leather strips a series of sturdy jerks to tighten the mesh.

"I expect you'd like to be foreman, wouldn't you, Dad?" Two-Bits asked innocently, whereupon Hepburn certified the accuracy of that surmisal by moving uneasily. "You'd make a fair foreman—*fair*. Now, Tommy, here," he continued, oblivious of the older man's discomfiture and the delighted smiles of the others, "would make a fine foreman if he'd only give a damn. But he don't—he don't! It's too bad, Tommy, you don't settle down an' amount to somethin'. You're the best hand in this country."

Beck lifted his face and sniffed loudly.

"The smell of your bouquet is about as delicate as your diplomacy, Two-Bits," he said.

Another pause. Beck resumed his whistling, and Hepburn again devoted his attention to the road. Once he looked at the other man from the tail of his eye, and a flicker of ill temper showed in his broad, grizzled face.

"Her name's Jane, ain't it?" Two-Bits was an ardent conversationalist. "Jane Hunter! I knowed a schoolmarm named Hunter wunst. She was worse 'n thunder for sourin' milk."

"I'll bet—"

"Listen!"

Oliver held up his knife in gesture, and Two-Bits stopped talking. The sounds of an approaching wagon were clearly audible.

"I'll bet it's the mail instead of—"

"You lose," muttered Hepburn, getting to his feet as a buckboard swung around the bend.

"An' she sure's come to stay!" from Jimmy as he closed his knife with an air of finality.

The body of the wagon was piled high with trunks and bags, and beside the driver sat a very small woman. That she was not of the West, not the sort of woman those men had been accustomed to deal with, was evident from the clothes she wore; but at least one of them remarked that she was not wholly without the qualities essential to the frontier, for when the driver dropped down to open the gate, he gave her the reins to the lathered, excited horses which had brought her from the railroad; as soon as the gate swung open they sprang forward, but she put her weight on the reins, spoke with confident authority, and wrenched them back.

"Not exactly helpless, anyhow," Tom Beck said to himself.

He was the only one of the group who did not walk across toward the cottonwoods which sheltered the long, red structure beside the creek. He sat there, braiding his belt, an indefinable half-smile on his face.

The girl—for girlishness was her outstanding quality—jumped out unassisted. She looked about slowly, at the house first of all, then at the low stable and the corrals, and lastly down the creek, on either side of which the hills rose sharply, giving a false appearance of narrowness to the bottoms, and her eyes rested for a long moment on the ridges far below, blue and sharp in the crystal distance.

She was unaware that the driver was waiting for her to give further directions, and that the three others had come close and stopped, waiting for her to notice them, for she said aloud, as if to herself:

"For a beginning, I consider this quite remarkable!"

Then she laughed sharply, with a hard, mirthless quality, and turned about.

She was genuinely surprised to confront the men. Evidence of this was in her eyes, which were large and remarkably blue. She smiled brightly and said:

"Oh, I didn't know I was overlooking any one! I suppose you men belong here, on the ranch, and it's likely you've been waiting for the new owner to come. Well, here I am! I'm Jane Hunter, and I want to know who you are. Now, what is your name?"

Her frankness, that unhesitating, assured manner of a distinct type of city-bred woman, was new to the men, but it overrode somewhat the embarrassment they all felt.

"My name is Hepburn, ma'am," Dad said, and shook hands heavily. "I hope you like this place."

"I know I shall, Mr. Hepburn. And your name?"

"That's Jimmy Oliver, Miss Hunter," Hepburn said.

Two-Bits had watched this with growing confusion, and when she turned upon him her searching, straightforward glance, his freckles became lost in a pink suffusion. He swayed his body from the hips and looked high over her head as he offered a limp hand.

"I'm Mr. Beal," he said weakly.

"Don't you believe that!" laughed Hepburn. "That's Two-Bits. He ain't entitled to any frills."

"Two-Bits it is!" the girl cried, scanning his face in amazement at its color and contour. "I couldn't call you mister, Two-Bits. We're going to be too good friends for that!"

"Oh, my gosh!" giggled the flustered cowboy, and turned away, seeking refuge in the bunk-house.

"You talk about me bein' got up by a feller that draws pictures, Tom," he said to Beck, "holy tin can, you ought to see

her! Why, this feller that paints them girls for the magazines painted her! She looks like she walked right out of a picture, with blue eyes an' yeller hair, an' all pink an' white. An' friendly—oh my, I'll bet she makes this outfit sit up an' take notice!"

Old Carlotta, the half-breed Mexican woman who had been housekeeper at the H. C. for years, had come from the house to greet her new mistress. The trunks were carried in, the buckboard departed for its twenty-five-mile trip back to town, and the riders who had been at work further down the creek straggled in to hear the first tales of their new boss.

Conjecture was high as to her plan of procedure.

"It won't take long for things to happen. You can bank on that," Jimmy Oliver declared. "She ain't our kind of a woman, an' the good Lord alone knows what notions she'll have, but she'll get busy! She's that kind."

He was not wrong, for just as the sun was drawing down into the hills, Carlotta appeared at the bunk-house.

"Miss Hunter, she want to spik to Señor Dad an' Beck an' Jimmy an' Curtis," she said. "Right away, quick—*pronto*."

"This must be a mass-meetin', with th' rest of us left out," Two-Bits said. "I'd give a dollar to look at her again—clost up. I'll bet I wouldn't be *afraid* to look next time!"

The four men summoned went immediately to the big house. Beck lagged a trifle, and it was certain from his manner that his curiosity was not greatly excited. He appeared to be amused, for his black eyes twinkled gaily; but as they passed through the gate they set their gaze on the back of Hepburn's broad neck, and a curious speculation showed in them.

Jane Hunter was waiting on the veranda, which ran the length of the ranch-house, and without formalities began her explanation.

"You all know the situation, I believe. My uncle left me this ranch, and I have come from New York to take possession. How long I remain depends on a number of things; but I find that for the present, at least, I must conduct my own business. For the last four weeks, since the property came to me, it has been in the hands of Mr. Alward, the attorney in town. I arrived yesterday, expecting to have his help, but his doctor has sent him into a lower altitude because of some heart difficulty, and I'm alone on the job, with nothing to guide me but a long letter he wrote.

"I know little about business of any sort, I know nothing at all about ranching, so I have a great deal to learn. I do know that the first thing I need is an actual head for this place, and that is why I called you here—to select a—a foreman, you call him? Mr. Alward left word that any one of you four men would be competent, and I'm going to choose one of you by chance. Understand, this is no guarantee to keep whoever is chosen on the job for any length of time; but I don't care to take the responsibility of handling the men myself, as my uncle and as Mr. Alward have done. Some one must do this, and until I learn enough to know what I want I shall be dependent upon whoever is selected."

She had spoken rapidly, at no loss for words, without a trace of hesitation or embarrassment, looking intently from face to face, studying the men as she explained her plan; but as she paused, her eyes were on Beck's eyes, and their gaze was arrested there a moment, as though it had encountered something not usual.

"I am going to need all your help, and all the suggestions that you can give me"—with a slight gesture to include the four, though she still looked straight at the tall Westerner—"but I feel that at first there must be system of some sort, a man at the head of the organization. I'm going to let you draw straws for the place."

The men stirred and looked at one another.

"That's fair enough," said Dad, with just a trace of indecision in his voice.

"For us," commented Curtis, a lean, leathery man.

Jane stooped and picked up an oat straw. She broke off four pieces, rolled them together, and placed them tightly between her thumb and palm.

"Now, draw!" she directed with a smile, holding them toward Curtis. "The lucky straw will be the shortest."

Curtis silently selected one of the bits. Then Jimmy Oliver drew, and the two stood eying the lots they had picked. Hepburn had cleared his throat twice rather sharply when the drawing commenced, and as he stepped forward at her gesture he manifested an eagerness which did not quite harmonize with his usual delibera-

"PICKIN' AT PIECES OF STRAW DON'T SEEM LIKE A GOOD WAY TO PICK MEN"

tion. He drew, eyed his straw, and glanced sharply at those held by the other two.

Beck had not moved forward with the others, but stood back, his thumbs hooked in his belt, his eyes, which were mildly smiling, still on the girl's face. She looked at him again, and saw there something other than the interest approaching eagerness which had been evident in the others. She read another thing which caught her attention; the man was laughing at her, she felt; laughing at her and at the entire performance. He evidently considered it an absurdity, and as she searched his expression again and perceived that this was no bucolic whim, but the attitude of a man whose assurance was as stable as her own, the smile which had been on her face faded a degree.

"Now it is your turn—the last straw," she said to him.

"Thank you, ma'am," he replied in an even, matter-of-fact voice, though that annoying smile was still in his eyes; "but I guess you can count me out."

She lowered the hand which held the straw.

"You don't care to draw?"

"That's what I meant, ma'am."

"And why not?"

She was piqued, without good reason, at this refusal.

"In the first place, ma'am, I've never taken a chance in my life if I knew it.

I've tried to arrange so I wouldn't have to. I'm a poor gambler."

A suggestion of a flush crept into the girl's cheeks, for though his manner was all frankness, he gave the impression that this was not his reason, or, at least, not his best reason. He seemed, in a subtle manner, to be poking fun at her.

"Besides," he went on, "pickin' at pieces of straw don't seem like a good way to pick men."

"You understand why it is being done that way?"

Though her manner did not betray it, she felt as if she were on the defensive.

"Yes, ma'am. I wasn't reflecting on you especially. I was thinkin' about your lawyer. But you won't be so very mad if I ain't crazy to take a chance, will you? If anybody wants to know whether I can hold a job or not, I'd sooner have 'em ask about me or try me; when it comes to drawing lots, I'll have to be counted out."

His eyes had been squarely on hers throughout, and when he ceased speaking they still clung. Beyond a doubt, she reasoned, that flicker in them was amusement, and yet she felt no resentment toward him. She was not even annoyed as she had been at his first refusal. It was interesting; it impressed her with a difference between him and the three who had drawn. For a moment she was impelled to argue; she wanted that man to help her more than she wanted to retain her poise—just an instant.

Abruptly she turned to the others.

"Very well; we will see who did win."

The four drew together and measured.

"Mr. Hepburn's is the shortest!" she cried, then looked at the fourth straw she still held. It was shorter than Hepburn's by half an inch.

"You would have drawn well," she said to Beck, holding it up.

"So it seems, ma'am," he answered, but she noticed that he did not look at her.

His eyes were on the new foreman's face, which was flushed, and the depressions beneath the eyes puffed a bit. He was nervously breaking to shreds the straw which had won the place, but about him was a bearing of unmistakable elation, and something in his eyes—which were small—and about his chin, suggested greed.

The four started away, and Jane stood watching them. One of them was to be her deputy in life's first—and perhaps life's saving—adventure; but she did not watch him. In fact, she had no thought for him. Her eyes followed Tom Beck until he was out of sight, and as she turned to enter the house she said:

"But he looks as though he might take a—long chance!"

II

He stood on a bearskin rug before the blazing fire, hat in hand, boots polished, tall and trim, with his handsome head bowed just a trifle. The blazing logs gave the only light to the place, and his bronzed face was burnished by their reflection.

"You sent for me?" he asked, as Jane Hunter came into the room.

She advanced from the shadows and for a moment did not reply. She felt that he was taking her in from her crown of light hair, down through the smart, high-collared waist to the short, scant skirt which showed her silken-clad ankles and the modish shoes. His eyes rested on those shoes. He was thinking that they were wonderfully plain for a city girl to wear—at least the only sort of city girl he had ever known; but they had a simplicity which he thought went well with her manner.

"I had planned on talking to Mr. Hepburn this evening," she said. "I want to get all the information and all the advice I can from the start. Carlotta said he had gone away, so in spite of the fact that you wouldn't gamble with me this afternoon, I sent for you. I think that you can tell me many things I need to know. You don't mind my asking you, do you? You don't feel that you'd be—be taking a chance talking to me?"

She took his hat.

"Sit down—" motioning to the davenport before the fire. "Would you like to start with a drink?"

"Why, yes—" eying her calculatingly.

"There's not much here. I slipped one bottle of vermouth in a trunk. I'll have to try to mix a cocktail in a tumbler, and there isn't any ice. It's likely to be a bad cocktail, but maybe it will help us talk."

She walked down the long room toward the dining-table and sideboard at the far end, and he heard glass clinking and liquids gurgling as he sat looking about with that small part of a smile on his features. All along the walls were books, and above the cases hung trophies of the country—heads of deer and elk, a pelt of a

mountain-lion and of a bobcat, a pair of magnificent sheep's horns, and a stuffed eagle. In the low windows were boxes of geraniums, Carlotta's pride.

"Here you are," she said as she returned, holding one of the two glasses toward Beck, who rose to accept it. "My uncle left a very small stock of drinks, but as soon as I know what I'm about I'll try to remedy that defect in an otherwise splendid establishment."

Her manner was terse, brisk, open, and her eyes met another's directly when she talked. She lifted her glass to her chin's level and smiled at him.

"To the future!" she said.

His question was adroitly timed, for she had just given the glass a slight toss, and was already carrying it toward her lips when his words checked the movement.

"I take it, ma'am, that you'll want this liquor to go where it 'll do your future the most good?"

He looked from her down to the cocktail he held, and moved the glass in a quick little circle to set the yellow liquid swirling. His voice had been quite casual, but when he raised his eyes to meet her inquiring look, the last of a twinkle was giving way to gravity.

"You mean—"

"Just about what I said; that you'd like to have this brace of drinks do your future some good?"

"Why, yes; that was my intention. Why?"

"You called me down here to get a little advice. Let's commence here."

He reached out for her glass in a manner which was at once gentle and dominating, presumptuous but unoffending, with a measure of certainty; still, by his face, she might have told that he was experimenting with her, not just sure of how she would react, perhaps not caring a great deal. His fingers closed on her glass and she yielded with half-laughing, half-protesting astonishment. He took both glasses in one hand, moved deliberately toward the hearth, and tossed their contents into the flames. He then set the empty tumblers on the mantel and turned about with a questioning smile on his lips.

The sharp, slowly dwindling hiss which followed completely died out before she spoke. Color had leaped into her cheeks and ebbed as quickly, her lips had shut in a tight line, and for a fraction of time it was as if she would angrily demand explanation. But she said, evenly enough:

"I don't understand that."

"I'm glad you didn't show how mad it made you," he replied.

"But why—what made you do it?"

"You said, you know, that you wanted that liquor to go where it 'd help your future. I thought the fire was about the best place for it under the circumstances."

"But why did—"

"And I believed you when you said you had a lot to learn, and that you called me down to start the job. You have a way of makin' people think you mean what you say. I'm mighty glad to give you advice; I thought this was a good way to begin."

Jane gave a queer laugh and sat down, looking blankly into the fire. She turned her face after a moment, and found him studying her as he sat at the other end of the davenport.

"I understand your meaning," she said, "but you're as startling in your actions as you must be in your reasoning. You didn't object to the idea of a drink; I didn't think many of you people did out here."

"We don't, ma'am. Most of us drink our share. I do."

"But just now you threw yours away."

"You see, I was bound to throw *yours* away. It wouldn't have been polite, would it, for me to drink and not let you?" His smile mocked her. "Besides, I ain't much on these fancy drinks. You warned me that it wouldn't be so very good, anyhow."

She stared at him in perplexity.

"You say you have no scruples against drinking?"

"Moderate drinking; no."

"Then why did you take this liberty with me?" suggesting indignation.

"You see, you're a woman. You guessed a minute ago that there wasn't much objection to hard liquor here. I told you you were right; most of us boys drink, but we can afford to and you can't." His manner was light, almost to the degree of banter, as if that which had aroused her was the simplest of matters.

"A man in this country don't build a reputation on many things. So long as he's honest, he gets along pretty well. But a woman—that's different. She has to make people know she's right in everything she does."

"An occasional drink will make her less right?"

"Not a bit less, ma'am; but it won't help other folks to *know* she's right. And that's all that counts. Everybody, man or woman, who comes into the West has to make or break by what he does here; nothin' that has been, good or bad, matters. They commence from the bottom again, and by what they do people judge them. Reputation is the first thing you've got to make for yourself. Everybody is watchin' you—the boys here on the ranch, the neighbors down creek, the people in town. You've got to show that you're honest; that you've got courage; if you were a man it could stop there; but you're a woman, and that makes it—

"Well, men out here expect things from a woman that I guess men in cities don't think so much about, and you might as well know now as any time that men in this country don't like to see a woman do some of the things they do. We ain't as polite as some; we ain't as gentle, when it's necessary to act quick and for sure, but maybe we make up for roughness in the idea we have of women. We think a good woman is about as fine a thing as God has made, ma'am, and we have our ideas of goodness.

"You see, you've got to handle men; you've got to have their respect, and you won't have their respect if you don't understand how they think, and act accordingly. Besides, you're on a job that's going to take all the brains and grit and strength you've got. Booze never helped anybody on a job like that. If you was a man, and your job was just ridin' after cattle, it 'd be different; but neither one is the case. My advice, ma'am!"

She watched his face a moment before saying:

"As long as I can remember, women about me have been drinking. Ever since I grew up I've been drinking. I've never taken too much. I've never needed it. I've done it because—because it was being done."

"Yeah. Well, it ain't done here. It's a new country and a new life for you, and one of the first things you've got to learn is how to get on with people. Maybe back East some of the folks wouldn't respect you if you didn't drink. There are folks like that, who think it's smart to do certain things; and maybe there are a lot of 'em like you, who don't need it, don't even want it; but they do it because of their reputations. You see, it's the same rule workin' backward out here."

The girl moved to face the fire again. She scowled a trifle, and the glow on her cheeks was not wholly due to the reflection of the blazing logs.

"Did it ever occur to you that there might be people who gave little attention to what others think of them?" she asked rather coldly.

"Sure thing; there are lots like that."

"I can see where, if a stranger were to plan to stay in a place like this for long, it might be expedient to—to cater to the community morals. I don't intend to be a permanent resident. That is, I won't if I can help it. I don't expect that I'd ever come up to your notion of a worthy woman"—a bitterness creeping into the voice—"so perhaps it is fortunate that I look on this ranch only as means to an end."

"You mean money, ma'am?" he asked, and when she did not reply at once he went on: "Folks generally come West for one of three reasons—money, or health, or because they like the country. I take it your health's all right—and that you ain't just struck with the country."

She made a slight grimace and sat forward, elbows on knees.

"Yes, money!" she said under her breath. "I came here to get it. I'm going to." She looked up at him quickly, eyebrows arched in a somewhat defiant query, and, after a pause, went on: "You don't seem to approve."

"No, ma'am," candidly, that smile only half-hidden in his eyes.

"And why not? What else is there out here for a woman like me?"

"That's a hard question. One thing she might find is herself, for instance."

She gave a startled laugh and asked:

"Herself?"

"The same, ma'am. I s'pose there are folks who live for money and what it 'll bring 'em. Cities must be full of 'em, or there wouldn't be so many cities. Folks do work pretty hard to make money and pile it up, but I've never seen any of 'em that got to be very successful in other ways. The more money they made the more they seemed to depend on makin' money to attract attention. They don't seem to think that it ain't what a man does that really counts so much as what he *is*. The same goes for a woman."

She sat back, brows drawn together.

"Are you trying to preach to me?" she asked sharply.

Beck laughed lightly, as though that obvious hurting of her pride delighted him.

"Not just, ma'am. Preachers hammer away at folks about sin and such. I hadn't thought about you as a sinner; I was just considerin' you and your job; and what you say brought you here. It's none of my business what you want to get out of life. You told me what you wanted, and asked me if I didn't like it, and I don't. That's all. It seems to me that everybody who's alive ought to want to get the best out of himself, and I don't think you can do it by just tryin' to herd dollars." He divined in her the question that she wanted to ask. "Sure, I'm only an ordinary cow-puncher, ma'am! I don't seem to care much about any kind of success, but I'm afflicted like everybody else; I'm a human being, and every one of us likes to pick on the faults he finds in others that correspond to his own faults.

"You see, you've got a big chance here. You've got a chance to be somebody. This is one of the biggest outfits in this State. All this country out here has been this outfit's range for years. You ain't got a neighbor in miles because you amount to so much. Away down Coyote Creek, 'most thirty miles below here, is Riley's ranch, and close by him is Hewitt's. Off west and south is Pat Webb's, who, far as you're concerned, might better be a good deal farther west. Your uncle and Riley was the first in here. Why, ma'am, they had to fight Indians to protect their cattle! They made names for 'emselves. They made money, too—or at least your uncle did—but he wasn't respected just because he made money. Men liked him because he *did* things. Men will like you if you do things, ma'am—perhaps you'll like yourself better, too."

He looked into her eyes and their gazes were for the moment very serious. Jane Hunter was meeting with a new sense of values; Tom Beck had sensed a faint recklessness, a despair, about her, and, behind all his mockery and lightness, a warm heart. Then she terminated the interval of silence by saying rather impatiently:

"That's all very interesting, but what you said about my needing my brains and my grit is of greater interest. Do you mean that it's just a big job naturally, or that there are complications?"

"Both."

"How much of both?"

Beck shoved a hand into his pocket and gave his head a skeptical twist.

"That remains to be seen. It's a man's job to run this place under favorable conditions. Your uncle, Colonel Hunter, sort of got shiftless in the last years. He let things slide. I don't know about debts an' such, but I suspect there are some. There are other things, though. You've got some envious neighbors, ma'am—and some that ain't over particular how they make their money"—with just a shade of emphasis on the last.

"You mean that they steal?"

"Plenty, ma'am."

"But how? Who?"

"I don't know, but it seems to be gettin' quite the custom here to get rich off the H. C.—especially since the place changed owners."

"Why at that particular time?"

"Since it got noised about that a woman was goin' to own it, there's been a lively interest in its affairs. I told you that your uncle was a man who was respected a lot. Some feared him, too."

"And they won't respect me because I'm a woman?"

"That's about it. It's believed, ma'am, that a woman, 'specially an Eastern woman, can't make a go of it out here, so what's the use of givin' her a fair show?"

He waited for her to speak again, but she did not, and he added with that experimental manner:

"So, maybe, if you want to make money, it 'd be well to find a buyer. Maybe if you was to take an interest in this ranch, and did want to be—to stay in this country, you couldn't make it go."

"Do you think that's impossible?"

He waited a moment before saying:

"I don't know. You don't make a very good start, ma'am."

"At least you are deliciously frank!"

"It pays; it does away with misunderstandings. I wouldn't want you to think—since you've asked me—that I believed you could make a go of this ranch, even if you wanted to."

That stung her sharply. She drew her breath in with a slight sound, and leaned quickly forward, as if ready to denounce his skepticism; but she did not speak.

She only rose impatiently and walked to the mantel.

"Do you smoke?" she asked, holding out a box of cigarettes.

"Yes; do you?"

"Yes."

In the word was a clear defiance. She struck a match and held it toward him, then lighted her own cigarette.

Seated again, she stared into the fire, smoking slowly, but as his eyes remained fast on her, the color crept upward into her cheeks, higher and brighter, until she turned to meet the gaze that was on her, and with a bite to the words, asked:

"You don't approve of this, either?"

"Why, ma'am, I like to smoke."

"But you stare at me as if I were committing a crime."

"You see, you're the first good white woman I've ever seen smoke."

"You—" She checked the question, looked at him, and then eyed her cigarette critically. "I don't suppose women out here do smoke, do they?"

"No, ma'am; not much."

"YOU SAID YOU WANTED THE LIQUOR TO GO WHERE IT 'D HELP YOUR FUTURE. I THOUGHT THE FIRE WAS ABOUT THE BEST PLACE FOR IT UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES"

"And you men? You men who drink and smoke, don't want the women to enjoy the same privilege?"

"That appears about it."

She did not answer. He rose and looked down upon her. One tendril of her golden hair, like silk in texture, caressed her fine-grained cheek, delicately contrasted against its alluring color. He would have liked to press it closer to the skin with his fingers—quite gently. But he said:

"I guess you and I don't understand each other very well, and if we don't it ain't any use in our talkin' further. As for advisin' you about your business—"

Jane blew on her ash.

"I just tried to show you how to start right, accordin' to my notion, and if it made you mad I'm sorry. After all, it don't matter so much what other folks think of us. It's what we think of ourselves that counts most; but none of us can get clear away from the other *hombre's* ideas."

That twinkle crept back into his eyes. Her little frame fairly bristled independence and self-sufficiency; it was in the pert set of her head, the poise of her square shoulders, the languid swinging of one small foot.

"I think that you think a lot of yourself, ma'am. That's more 'n most folks can say."

She rose as he reached for his hat.

"I'm glad to have your opinion on the proportions of my job," she said; "and for that I am glad that you came in."

The oblique rebuke could not be misunderstood.

"I'm complimented," he replied.

Although she looked frankly and impersonally up at him, she had a quick fear that despite her assurance, this man was leaving her with a strange feeling of inferiority; and when he went through the doorway into the night she was quite certain he was smiling merrily.

She stood until the sound of his footsteps dwindled, then turned to the table and stood idly caressing the wood. Her fingers encountered something which she picked up and examined, at first abstractedly. It was a bit of straw, the one which Beck had refused, and which, drawn, would have made him her right-hand man. She moved toward the fire to toss it into the flames, then checked herself, and, instead, put it between the covers of a book which lay handy.

She stood on the stone hearth thinking of what he had said, cigarette smoke curling up her small hand and delicate wrist. The offended feeling subsided, and, wonderingly, she tried to restimulate it; but the sensation would not return. Of a sudden she felt small and weak and of little consequence.

So he doubted, even, that she could be herself!

She dropped the stub of her cigarette into the fire and, frowning, reached for another, and tapped its end on the mantel. She struck a match and put the white cylinder to her lips; then, quite slowly, waved the glare out and tossed the tiny stick into the coals. With a movement, which was so deliberate that it was almost weary, she dropped the unlighted cigarette after it. Slight as was the gesture, there was in it something of finality.

The coals were dimmed with ash before she moved to walk slowly to the window and look out. It was cold and still.

A movement among the cottonwoods attracted her. A man was walking there, slowly, as one on patrol. She watched him go the length of the row of trees; then followed his slow progress back, saw him stand watching the house a moment before he moved on toward the bunk-house.

She lay awake for hours that night—partly from a helpless rage; but, later, a rare thrill, a hope, perhaps, kept sleep from her mind.

III

"Now about the men, Miss Hunter," said Hepburn.

When he reached this subject he looked through the deep window far down the creek; and had Jane known him better she might have seen hesitancy with his deliberation, as if he approached the subject reluctantly.

"How many will you need on the ranch?" she asked.

"Not many yet. Four besides myself. There's seven here now. That is, there'll be six, because one is pullin' out this mornin' of his own accord. We'll need more when the round-up starts, but until then—about June—we can get along. The fewer the better."

"That will be largely up to you. Of course I will be consulted."

"I guess we'll keep Curtis and Oliver. Then there's Two-Bits—"

"Oh, keep Two-Bits by all means!" she laughed. "I'm in love with him already."

"All right, we'll keep Two-Bits. As for the other, there's a chance to choose, because—"

"Beck—how about him?"

Her manner was a bit too casual, and she folded a sheet of memoranda with minute care before her foreman, who eyed her sharply, replied:

"He's settled that for himself, I guess. He was packin' his war-bag when I come down here. I told him to come to the house for his time."

"You mean he's leaving?"

Hepburn nodded.

"Why?"

"Well, I guess his nose is out of joint at not bein' picked for foreman."

"But he wouldn't even draw—said he wouldn't take a chance!"

"I know. He appeared not to give a hang for the job, but he's a funny man. He an' I never got along any too well. We don't hitch."

"Is he a good worker?"

"If he wants to be. He don't say much, but he always—why, he always seems to be laughin' at everybody an' everything."

"I think *I* could persuade him to want to work for me."

"Perhaps. But then, too, he's hot-tempered. He's in kind of bad with some of the boys over trouble he's had."

"What trouble?"

"Why, principally because he beat up a man—Sam McKee—on the beef ride last fall."

"What for?"

"Well—he thought the man was a little rough with his horse."

"And he whipped him because he had abused a horse? That, it seems to me, isn't much against him."

"No; maybe not. He beat him a sight worse than Sam beat his horse," he explained, moving uneasily. "Anyhow, he's settled that. Here he comes now after his time."

Jane stepped nearer the window. Beck approached, whistling softly. He wore leather chaps with a leather fringe and great silver conchos. A revolver swung at his hip. His movements were easy and graceful. She opened the door, and, seeing her, he removed his hat.

"I've come for my time, ma'am," he explained.

"Won't you come in? Maybe you're not going to go just yet."

He entered, and she thought that as he glanced at Hepburn, who did not look up, his eyes danced with a flicker of delight.

"I don't know as I can stay, ma'am. I told your foreman a little while ago that I'd be going. Somebody's got to go, and it may as well be one as another."

"Don't you think my wishes should be consulted?" she asked.

He twirled his hat, looking at her with a half smile.

"This is your outfit, ma'am. I should think your wishes ought to go, but it won't do for you to start in with more trouble than's necessary."

"But if I want you, and Mr. Hepburn wants you, where is there any chance for trouble? You *do* want him, don't you, Mr. Hepburn?"

The older man looked up with a forced grin.

"Bless you, Miss Hunter, yes! Why, Tom, the only reason I thought we might as well part was because I figured you'd be discontented here."

"Now! You see, your employer wants you and your foreman wants you. What more can you ask?" the girl exclaimed, facing Beck.

"Nothin' much, of course, unless what I think about it might matter."

Her enthusiasm ebbed, and she looked at him, clearly troubled.

"I am not urging you to stay because I need one more man. It is essential to have men I can trust. I can trust you. I need you. I—I'm quite alone, you know, and I have decided to stay—if I *can* stay."

She flushed ever so slightly at the indefinable light in his eyes.

"You told me last night some of the things I must do, which I can't do wholly alone. I should like very much to have you stay"—ending with a girlish simplicity quite unlike her usual manner.

"Maybe my advice and help ain't what you'd call good," he said.

Her gaze fell.

"I thought it over when you had gone," she said, "and I came to the conclusion that it was good advice." Her eyes went back to his, splendidly frank. "Some of us are apt to be disconcerted when we listen to new things; and, again, when we know that they come sincerely and our pride quits hurting, we're inclined, per-

"JANE, I'M GOING TO STOP THIS FOOLISHNESS! I LOVE YOU, I LOVE YOU! I'M NOT GOING TO SEE YOU LOSING YOUR HEAD THIS WAY!"

haps, to take a new point of view. I have, on some things."

His face sobered in the rare way it had. "I'm mighty glad," he said.

Hepburn had watched them closely, not understanding, and in his usually amiable face was a cunning speculation.

"I wouldn't ask you to take a chance against your better judgment. If you must move on, I'm sorry. But—I need you."

In those three final words was a plea, frank, unabashed, and her eyes were filled with it. As he stood looking down at his hat, evidently undecided, she lifted one

TOM STOOD A MOMENT IRRESOLUTE, AS IF HE THOUGHT HIS PRESENCE MIGHT BE NEEDED

hand and spoke again in a tone that was low and sweet:

"Won't you, please?"

"I'll stay," he said, with a nod.

"I'm so glad!" she cried. "And you're glad, aren't you, Mr. Hepburn?"

The foreman had watched closely, trying to determine just what this all meant; but when her manner had changed it had been subtle, and, not knowing what had gone before, he was mystified. At her

question he forced a show of heavy enthusiasm.

"Bet your life!" he said.

Then he looked up to see the tall cowboy eying him with that half-humorous smile.

"Now we can start doing business," he added, getting up. "Tom, Miss Hunter wants a horse. She says she can ride, and wants the best we've got, right off, to-day. There's that bunch that's been ranging in Little Piñon all winter. Guess we'd better bring 'em down this forenoon and let her pick one."

They departed. They had little to say to one another in the hours it required to gather the horses and bring them down, but when they were within sight of the corrals Hepburn began to speak as if what he had to say was the result of careful deliberation.

"I don't want us to have any misunderstandin', Tom. This mornin' I figured you wanted to move, an' I don't want any man in the outfit who'd rather be somewhere else, so long as I'm runnin' it." He shifted his weight in the saddle and glanced at Beck, who rode, looking straight ahead. "Course you an' I ain't been pals. I've thought sometimes you didn't like me—"

"I s'pose she'll want a gentle horse," the other broke in.

"Prob'ly. You and I can be friends, I know. We can get along—"

"Look at this outfit!" Beck interrupted again, this time with better reason.

Around the bend in the road appeared a queer cavalcade. It was headed by a pair of ancient mules drawing a covered wagon, on the seat of which sat a scrawny, discouraged-looking man with drooping eyelids, mustache, and shoulders. To the wagon were tied three old mares, and behind them trailed half a dozen colts, ranging from one only a few weeks old to a runty three-year-old. These were followed by a score of cattle, mostly cows and yearling calves, and the rear was brought up by a girl riding a big brown horse.

She was young, and yet her face was strangely mature. She wore a hat worse for wear, a red shirt, open at the throat, a riding-skirt, and dusty boots. She slouched easily in the saddle, as one who has ridden much.

Tom spurred ahead, to prevent their horses from entering a draw which opened on the road just where they must pass; and as he slowed to a walk and looked back he saw Hepburn making a movement of one hand. That hand was just dropping to the fork of his saddle, but—and he knew that this may have been purely a product of his imagination — he thought that it had been lifted in a gesture of warning.

The foreman halted, and the wagon stopped with a creak, as of relief.

"Just foller on down an' swing to the left. Keep right on. You'll pass the State boundary," Beck heard Hepburn say.

The wagon started again and Dad joined him.

"Goin' some place?" Tom asked.

"Utah. He was askin' the way."

Just then the girl came within easy talking distance.

"Goin' far?" Tom asked.

"Not so very fur," the other replied sullenly, and swung a worn quirt against her boot.

They rode on after their horses.

"Nesters," Beck commented grimly. "They're a bad lot to see comin' in."

"Thank God they're headed for Utah," Dad replied.

"Yeah. Utah's a long ways, though. The girl didn't seem to think they was going so very far."

The other made no answer, and after a moment Beck said:

"Notice the brand on them cattle—T Bar O? That ain't a good neighbor for the H. C. to have—unless it's an honest neighbor."

"Well, they're goin' into Utah," Dad said doggedly.

"You know, Hepburn, one of the first things I'd do if I was foreman of this outfit?" Beck asked.

"What's that?"

"Take up the water in Devil's Hole. That's the best early feed this outfit has got, but without water it's worthless. Nesters are comin' in, which would worry me, if I was foreman. The colonel had somebody file on it once, planning to buy when he'd patented the claim. The party didn't make good, and the matter dropped."

The other did not reply for a moment, but looked hard at his horse's ears as if struggling to control himself.

"I've already took that up with her," he said sulkily, and stirred in his saddle. "If I wasn't foreman of an outfit do you know what I'd do? I'd let the foreman do the worryin'."

Beck scratched his chin with a concern which surely could not have been genuine, for he said:

"Yeah. That's the best way. Only —"

"Well, you had your chance to be foreman; why didn't you take it?"

Beck pondered a moment.

"In the first place I wasn't crazy-wild to stay with this outfit, 'cause when I lift my nose in the air and sniff real careful I can smell a lot of hell coming this way, and I'm a mighty meek and peaceful citizen. In the second place, I don't care much about drawing the best job in the country like I'd draw a prize cake at a church social."

Hepburn sniffed.

"You passed it up, though. Now, why don't you pass up worryin' about my job?"

Beck did not reply at once, but turned on the other a taunting, maddening smile.

"You're right. I passed it up, but there's something that won't let me pass up the worry. You know what that is"—nodding toward the distant ranch-house. "You know she's in a jack-pot. You heard her tell me she needed good men, men she could trust, and the good Lord knows that's so. You know I stayed on because she asked me like she meant it, and not because I fancied the job. I've got a notion that makin' good out here means more to her than making money. I like her style, and I like to help her sort, if I can. That's why I may do more 'n an ordinary hand's share of worryin'. You know, somebody's got to"—significantly.

"What's meant by that, Beck?" Dad asked after a moment, and the grit in his tone told that the insinuation had not missed its mark.

"If it was so awful hard for you to guess, Hepburn, I don't think you'd get on the peck so easy. I mean that since she's asked me to stay and work for her, I'm on the job—not only with both hands and feet and what head I've got, but with my eyes and my ears and my heart. I don't want trouble, but if I've got to take trouble on, I'll do it on the run; you can tie to that! I don't like you, Hepburn; I don't trust you. Your way ain't my way — no, no, you listen to *me!*" as the other attempted to interrupt. "A while back you was trying to talk friendship to me, when I'm about as popular with you as fever. Now I don't do things that way, Hepburn. I ain't got a thing on you, but if this was my ranch I wouldn't want you for foreman."

"You mean you think I'd double-cross her an'—"

"I don't recall bein' that specific. I just mentioned that I don't trust you. There's no use in you're getting so wrought up over it. I may be wrong. If I am, you'll win. I may be takin' a chance, which is against my religion, but I'm here to work for this Hunter girl, and her only, and it won't be healthy for anybody who is working against her to bring himself to my notice. Now I guess we understand each other. Maybe you can get me fired. If so, that's satisfactory to me. So long as I'm here and working for you, I'll be the best hand you've got. If you're lookin' for good hands I'll satisfy you. If you ain't—we may not get along so well."

There was a seriousness in Tom's eyes, but behind it was again the flicker of mockery, as if this might not be such a serious matter after all.

"We'll see, Beck," Hepburn said with a slow nodding. "We understand each other. You've covered a lot of teritory. Your cards are on the table. Bet!"

Tom stroked his horse's withers thoughtfully. He continued to smile, but the smile was not pleasant.

When they entered the big gate, an automobile was standing before the bunk-house, and, after turning the horses into a corral, they dismounted and walked toward it.

"Hello, Larry!" exclaimed Hepburn to the chauffeur. "What brings you out?"

"Nothin' much, judgin' by his conversation," replied Larry.

"Visitor?"

"Dude. Regular dude from N'Yawk, b' gosh!" Larry spat and grinned. "Come in yesterday an' was busier 'n hell all day, buzzin' around town. First thing this A.M. he wants to come here. Great attraction you've got, it seems."

"The new boss?"

"The same, indeed! I seen her. Quite a peach, I'll go on record. But— The boys tell me she's going to run this outfit with her own lily-white hands."

"So she says," replied Dad benevolently. "I think she'll do a good job, too."

"Like so much hell, you do! An' I hear you're foreman, Dad. You figurin' on marryin' the outfit or gettin' rich by honest endeavor?"

"Sho, Larry! You an' your jokes!"

the man grumbled good-naturedly, and entered the building.

"Well, if any of you waddies are calculatin' marryin' this filly you've got to build to her. This dude sure means business. He's found out more about the H. C. in one day than I ever knew. Besides, what I knew an' he didn't, he got comin' out. He's sure a devil for obtainin' news. There he is now—see?"

He gestured toward the ranch-house where Jane and the stranger stood on the veranda, the girl pointing to the great sweep of country which showed down creek. Then they turned and reentered the house.

IV

"And so this is yours!" The man who was visiting Jane laughed. "Yours and your business!"

"My business, Dick! For the first time, I feel as if I had a real object in living."

He smiled cynically.

"Jane, queen of the range!" he mocked.

She did not smile with him.

"I expect it is funny to you," she said soberly. "It must be funny to all the old crowd. I can hear them, as soon as they know that I have decided to stay here—the girls at tea, the men in their clubs—talking it over. Jane Hunter, burying herself in the mountains and *doing* something, becoming earnest and serious-minded, getting up with the sun and going to bed at dark! It is strange!"

"It's too strange for life, Jane," he said, pulling up his trousers gingerly and sitting on the davenport. He leaned back and smoothed his sleek hair. "It isn't real. You're going to wake up before long and find that out. It was absurd enough for you to come here, but this preposterous notion that you are going to *stay*—why, that's beyond words! What got into you, anyhow?" He eyed her closely.

"I don't know yet. It's a strange impulse, but it's real, the first real thing that's ever got into me, I guess. I know only that—except that it is a pleasant sensation. When I left New York I was desperate. I came here to take something tangible that was mine, and to go back with it; and now I've found out that the thing I want is nothing that I can see or touch, that I can't take it away with me—not for a long time, anyhow. It isn't waiting ready-made for me; I must create it from the materials that are in my hands."

He continued to look at her a thoughtful moment.

"Well, old girl, you've told me a lot about yourself and about this ranch and about these men who are working for you. You've told me about this country and, rather vaguely, about your plans. I suspect you don't know much about them yet," he added parenthetically. "You've not asked a question about New York nor why I came."

She picked a yellowed leaf from a geranium plant and turned to face him.

"As for New York," she said with a lift of the eyebrows and a quick tilt of her head, "I don't give a—damn"—softly. "As for your coming, I didn't need to ask. When a man has followed a girl wherever she went, to sea, to other countries, for four years, there is nothing surprising in the fact that he should trail her only two-thirds of the way across this continent. But it's no use, Dick. I made up my mind that I would not marry you before I came here. I tried to convince you of the honesty of my purpose in my last letter, but perhaps I failed because I wasn't truly honest with myself then. I thought I was through, but, in reality, I was only planning a variation of the old way of doing things. Now I'm finished absolutely with the rot I've called life!"

She lifted her chin and shook her head in emphasis. The man laughed.

"You amuse as much as you thrill me," he said, looking at her hungrily.

"That's a splendid way to help a fellow—to laugh at the first effort I make to justify my existence!"

"I want to help you, Jane. I've always wanted to help you. I've put myself and what I have at your disposal. I've not only done that, but I've begged and pleaded and schemed to make you take them. You'd never listen when I talked love to you. You've always seemed to be a peculiarly material-minded girl, and I had to play on that; but when I've talked ease and comfort and luxury to you, you know that I've meant more than just those things. It's been love, Jane—love in every syllable."

He rose and walked to stand before her.

"That hurt," she said with a sharp little laugh. "That—materialism. But I believe it was only too true. It had to be, you see. It was the only thing I could see to live for. There was the one thing I missed, the thing I had expected to find.

It was the thing you talked about—love. I wanted love, tried to find love, and at twenty-five gave it up. That's a horrible thing, Dick—giving it up at twenty-five! It shows, though, how hopeless the search was."

"But I have offered you love, continually, for four years."

"Dick—oh, Dick! You don't know what that means. You showed that when you selected your tactics—trying to give me things that I could taste and touch and see. Why, I suppose my body is attractive to you, but if it had been love, the real thing, that you felt, you'd have overwhelmed me with it, you would not have allowed another consideration to enter, you'd have swept me off my feet with making me understand that it *was* love. You wouldn't have talked places and motors, luxury and aimlessness." Her voice shook. She was hurt, bordering on anger.

"You pass the buck," he retorted evenly. "You've told me, time after time, that love didn't matter to you."

"Not the sort you offered. It never could."

"There's another kind, then?"

"Somewhere"—with an emphatic nod.

"You think you can find the sort you're looking for here?"

"I don't know. I haven't thought of that yet, but I know there is something else I can find."

"And that?"

"Myself!"—stoutly.

He threw back his head with a hearty laugh.

"You talk like a convert, Jane!"

"I am, Dick—just that. I've seen the evil of my ways, I have seen the light; I'm going to try to justify my existence, going to try to stand for something, to be something, not just a girl with looks or with—money. I may miss love entirely, but I have realized, all of a sudden, that as yet I'm not fit for the love I wanted. Why, I have nothing to give to a man but my body! A woman doesn't win a true love by such a transaction. If I can stand alone, if I can fight my own battles, if I can overcome obstacles that are as real as the love I have wanted, then I will be justified in seeking that love. And there's another consideration—if this thing I have wanted never does come, I have the opportunity of gaining all that you say you could give me by my own efforts—the comforts, the material things. I wouldn't be trading myself for them, you see; I'll be winning them with my hands and what intelligence I may possess."

"Are you sure of that, Jane? Are you sure that a girl who has never done a tap of work in her life, who has not even talked business with business men, can come out here and beat this game? Oh, I know what I'm talking about, and you don't. I spent all yesterday in town looking up this place, because your letter was convincing in, at least, one thing. I know your enthusiasm when it's aroused. I know that you'd rush in where a business prince wouldn't even chance a peek! When men talk about you in town they grin. The bartender grinned when he told me about you. The banker grinned. The man who drove me out thought it was a fine joke! These men know; they're not skeptical because they know you or your past, but they know the job, and that you're a stranger. That's enough. You can't beat another man's game."

"I can try, can't I?"

"But what's the use?"—with a gesture of impatience and a set of the mouth that was far from pleasant. "You're doomed to fail, and even if you should hit on the one chance in a thousand of pulling through, what would you get? Less than I can give you in the time it takes to sign my name. You won't let me talk love, and you don't seem to have much hope that you ever will find the love you think you want, so let's put love aside once more. Come with me, Jane. I'll give you all you could ever hope to get and without the cost of the awful effort anything like success would require. You've been bored, perhaps, and discouraged. You've taken this thing as a—a last straw. Won't you listen to reason?"

"The last straw," she repeated. "Yes, I guess that is it. Dick, do you know how close I came to letting you do the thing you want to do?" She put the question sharply. "I'll tell you—within three hundred dollars! That's how close. Oh, you don't know the game I've played. No one knows it. You have just seen the exterior, the show. You've never been behind the scenes with me.

"I never knew my mother. I never knew my father well. I don't know that he cared much for me after she went; perhaps, though, he was only afraid to bring up a

HE FELT HER BREATH ON HIS CHEEK, FOR THEIR FACES WERE VERY CLOSE; HE FELT HIS HEART LEAP, TOO

girl alone. First it was boarding-school, then finishing-school, then a woman companion of the smart sort. Then he died, and we discovered that his fortune was not what it had been, that it was a miserable thing for a girl to depend on who had been trained as I had been trained.

"You met me soon after I was alone. I fell in with your crowd, and they picked me up. I didn't like them particularly, and certainly I didn't like their life, but it was the only one open for me. We lived from cocktail to cocktail, from party to party; we traveled, but wherever we went it was always the same; the setting was the only thing that changed. Materialism is the right charge! I was steeped in it; all those girls were. It was the only thing any of us lived for. Girls sold themselves for material advantage; they loathed it, most of them, but they lied to themselves and tried to make the rest of us believe it was happiness. They knew, and we knew, what it was; and we knew, too, that they were helpless to do otherwise. Then you came and made love to me on the same crass basis. I liked you, Dick. I didn't love you. I cared no more for you than I did for three or four men, so I kept putting you off, never actually discouraging you to a point where you would give up. I was simply closing my eyes to the inevitable.

"Now and then we met women—strange creatures, to us—who did things. I never can make any one understand how inferior I felt beside them. Why, I remember one little decorator who, because she was young and cheap, came to do my apartment over. I had her stay for dinner, and she was quite overwhelmed with many things. When she went away I cried from sheer envy. She was going down somewhere into Greenwich Village to sleep in a stuffy little studio; but she was *doing*—something. I used to feel guilty before my dressmaker, and even my maid. I didn't understand why that was, then; it was not a sensation produced by reason; by intuition, rather.

"And then I had to look at things as they were. I paid up everything and totaled my bank balance. Every source of income I had ever had was gone, and I had left—three hundred and two dollars. That was on a Friday, the Friday of our last week-end party at the Hollisters' in Westchester. You talked to me again that night, after we had been playing billiards. Dick, I had made up my mind to take you up. The words were on my lips; I was within a breath of telling you that it was a bargain, that I'd sell myself to you for the things you could buy me. I don't know why I didn't. Maybe it was this part of me I had never known until I came here, this part which enthuses so over what lies before me now, the part that used to envy the girls who did things. We went back to town, and there was a letter for me from this little frontier law-office, telling me that I had inherited this ranch. I didn't sleep a minute. A ranch in the mountains! I was sole owner of a business! I can never make you understand the relief I experienced. It meant money, and money meant that I could go on in the old way, putting off the inevitable, blinding myself to what I actually was.

"That was my motive in coming here—to turn this property into money. And no sooner had I made the acquaintance of these people than I began to learn that my point of view had been radically different from theirs. I had thought that money would give me the things I wanted, independence and prestige; but I found that with them—with the best of them, anyhow — that sort of standing was not considered. The thing that counts out here is being yourself, Dick—making a place by your determination, your wits, impressing people with the best that is in you. Material things don't count in the mountains; that is, they don't count primarily. They are nice things to possess, but the possession of them alone does not bring respect—the respect of others or self-respect. That, I think, is what I want—respect. That is what I am going to win. The only way I can win it is to establish a place for myself by my own efforts. These men doubt that I can do it. You are right, I believe, when you picture the whole country expecting me to fail. Well, that's an incentive, isn't it, to do my best? That is what I am here to do. There's Book One; and there"—looking out into the country—"is the rest of the story."

The man did not reply for an instant, but stood frowning at the floor.

"And when you fail—what then?"

She laughed frankly, merrily.

"Don't say *when* so positively! But if I should fail, Dick, I might have to take you up! It might break my faith in myself, because it's a young, immature faith, but it will give me a chance, a few months

of seeing whether I'm of any account. It gives me a hope."

As she spoke of her alternative a glimmer, as of hope, passed across the man's thin, finely molded face, but he did not let her see. He shook his head and said:

"After this the first thing I need is a drink."

"On the sideboard," she answered, "is my stock."

He walked down the room and examined the bottles, then poured out two drinks and returned with them.

"Anyhow, we'll drink to your future, whatever and wherever it may be," he said, cynical again.

"That's kind of you, but I'm afraid you'll have to drink alone."

She put the glass he had handed her on the table.

"It's the first time I've ever seen you refuse a drink."

"I believe it's the first I've ever refused. A record broken! That, like the rest of the old life, all belongs in Book One."

"You—you never thought you used enough to hurt?"

"No. I'm sure I never used enough to hurt my body. I never thought I used enough to hurt anything about me—until last night."

"What made you change your mind?"

She was half impelled to pass the question off, then said resolutely:

"A man came here to talk to me, one of my cow-punchers. I made a cocktail. He threw it away."

"Well, that was a devil of a thing to do! Did you fire him, as he deserved?"

"No"—deliberately, tracing a line on a rug with her toe and watching it critically—"I took his advice. You see, the men out here expect things from women that no one has ever expected from me before."

"Turned Puritan, Jane?" he sneered. "A sweet thing to face, trying to be other than yourself, confining yourself to the morals of the crowd!"

"Not just that, Dick. There's a sweetness about it, yes. As for morals—we didn't discuss them at all. This man said that he supposed some people thought it was smart to drink. That hit me rather on the head. We were the smartest people in New York, weren't we?"

"Rot!"

"Perhaps. It interested me, though, when I'd got over the first shock. He said another thing that interested me. He said that I was the first *good* white woman he'd ever seen smoke."

Dick laughed harshly.

"At least he did you the honor to think you good."

"Yes"—still deliberately—"and it was a novel sensation. It was the first time any man had ever appealed to the commonplace thing in me that we call womanhood. He wasn't preaching. It was a practical matter with him. I don't think you'd understand this man, Dick. He takes little things quite seriously, and yet he appears to be laughing at the whole scheme all the time."

He put his glass down slowly.

"Do you mean that some of these rough-necks has been making love to you?"

"Oh, by no means. I don't think he even likes me, though I want him to. Why, this morning he was going away, was not even going to work for me, and I had to beg him to stay. Dick, you don't understand! This man is so different from you, from me, from all of us. Rough, yes, but I don't think he'd try to buy a woman. If he did, I'm sure he'd be frank about it; he wouldn't hide behind words."

She looked hard at him, and though she smiled, her words stung him; but before he could break in she went on:

"When I sat here, having him talk to me, last night, I had that dreadful inferior feeling again. I felt as if I weren't up to the standard of good women that these rough-necks hold. I can't explain it to you, because you wouldn't let yourself understand. I was furious for a time, but he was right, according to his way of thinking. That way is going to be my way"—with growing firmness. "I'm playing a new game, and I must play it according to the rules. I did more than make up my mind to leave drinks and cigarettes alone. I resolved that I'd try to be worthy in every way of the respect I want these men to have for me."

"Because this Westerner doesn't approve of the way you have lived?"

"Yes. He knows the rules of the new game."

"Jane, I'm going to stop this foolishness!" He advanced to her and caught her hands in his. "I love you, I love you! I'm not going to see you losing your head this way!" She struggled to withdraw her hands. "No, I'm going to hold you, going to keep you. I'm—"

He drew her to him roughly, but she slipped from the clasp of his arm and backed across the room, her hands still imprisoned in his.

"Dick!"

It was not her cry which caused him to halt. It was a step outside the door; and, standing there, her hands in his, he met the level, amused gaze of Tom Beck.

Jane turned from him, and he let her go without attempt to restrain her further.

"Ma'am, the horses are here. Your foreman said to tell you."

Tom's face lost a measure of its lightness as he stood, hat in hand, looking from the man whose face was lined with passion to the girl, flushed and a bit breathless.

"Very well—and thank you. I'll be out soon."

He stood a moment irresolute, as if he thought his presence might be needed there. Then turned and walked away.

"Your help seems rather unceremonious," Hilton remarked.

"Thanks for that! What if he had seen more? Dick, are you beside yourself? Would you take my caresses by force, and call that love?"

"It proves that it's love," he replied tensely. "You set me wild with your vagaries, Jane! You—" He checked himself, and with an obvious effort smiled. Then he went on, with voice and manner under control: "You see, I am much in love with you. and losing you for only a little while puts me a bit off my head. I have wanted you for four years, and I'm jealous of the months, even the weeks. I'm sure, but that doesn't help much."

"Sure? Of what?"

"Of you."

"And why?"

"Because I know you. You confessed your weaknesses just a moment ago. You know as well as I that you're without foundation, without background for this experience. Why, Jane, if you'd been capable of fighting your own battles you'd have forced the issue long before it was necessary; but you are not. You need help, you need the faith of other people. Women like you weren't made to stand alone!"

"Flattering!"

"Yes, it is. You were made to be loved, to be protected, to have the men take the knocks for you, you and all your kind. You were born to lean, to make the lives of men worth while by leaning on them, never to attempt to go your own way. You have always done just this, and you have admitted it here this afternoon. Your wild wants, your absurd desires—every one has them. That is a rule of life—wanting to do the thing you are not fitted to do; and to fool with it is to court disaster. You can no more be a business woman than I can fly; you can no more cut yourself away from your old environment and slip into this than one of your cow-punchers could fit into my life. Don't you see that you're risking disaster? In your old life you had a belief in yourself; in this you think you have, but you have not. Your eyes will be opened, and when you see that you have failed—then you will be a failure, and nothing is so hopeless as that realization.

"You are weak, and I thank God for that weakness. You know that it is either this or me. You are trying this, trying to refuse me, but you will come back to me just as surely as we stand together in this room. You may come back without a shred of faith in yourself; but I have faith in you, in the old Jane, the one I know and love, and I can bring that back. The future won't be bad; it will be wholly good."

His words were very gentle, his manner most kindly, but beneath it was a scarcely detectable hardness, a deliberate, cold determination, and perhaps it was this which struck a fear into the girl's heart.

Weak? Surely, she was weak! She always had been weak, never had proved strength by thought or decision until now. And she did not know—she did not know—

"You are sure that I will come back?" she managed to say naturally enough. "What if I should fail? Might I not try somewhere else?"

"You might, if you were another sort; but you won't. And you will fail, in spite of all you can do, Jane."

She sensed the harsh strength beneath his smooth manner. His pronouncement had not been as an opinion; as a verdict, rather, and ominous in its assurance.

He picked up his hat and gloves.

"I know—I know. It is of no use to argue with you. You must learn this lesson by experience. It is going to be bitter, but I will do all I can to make what waits beyond take away that taste, Jane. I am not going away. I'm going to stay in this little town. After four years of waiting and following I can well do that. Your world is there, Jane, yours for the asking.

There are the things you wanted; there is the love you want if you only will see it."

He left her then, and when he had gone she felt a quick panic come. His manner left her with a sense that he thought more than he had spoken, that his assurance was founded well, that he would not be the tacit waiter he had suggested. She knew his passion for her, she knew his will, and it came to her then that beneath his sleekness he was ruthless.

She stared down Coyote Creek, not following him with her eyes.

"The things I have wanted—yes," she thought. "But *love*—is that anywhere?"

The sound of the departing car roused her, and she watched it go. Then a commotion in the corral attracted her. She saw horses milling, saw Tom Beck standing ready, rope in his hand; then, with a dexterous flip of the loop, a slight, overhand motion, he snared a pinto, braced his feet against the antics of the animal, and held firmly until it had quieted.

She watched him go down the rope slowly, hand over hand, with caution and assurance until he rested his fingers on the nose of the frightened animal. A forefoot shot out in a lightning stroke at him, but he did not flinch. She saw that he was talking to the horse, gently, quietly, with the born confidence of the master.

"Anywhere?" she asked herself again, this time aloud, still watching Beck. "Why"—her eyes lighting in surprise that was almost astonishment—"it might be—it *might* be!"

V

Beck was still busy with the horses when Jane appeared, bareheaded and clad in a riding-habit. He had separated the unbroken stock from the horses that had been turned loose for the winter, and was working with these last, overcoming the shyness that months on the range had engendered. As she stopped at the corral he walked toward her, studying her face. There was no trace of confusion or embarrassment, and for all he could discern she might have had her mind on horses only since early forenoon. That puzzled him, because, though he was far from certain, he had felt that the scene he had interrupted had caused her distress.

"These, ma'am, are the gentle horses," he explained. "I sorted 'em out for you. They're some of the best you've got."

"They're rough, of course," she remarked, after eying the animals a moment. He looked at her sharply, because her manner was of one who is familiar with horses. "But nothing here looks particularly good. Are these all you brought in?"

"I cut the rest into the little corral. There's some good ones there, but they ain't gentle."

They walked toward the other enclosure, and at their approach the colts gave evidence of alarm.

"Now that brown horse has been ridden some—"

"What about the sorrel?" she broke in, as a shapely head with a white star between the eyes and a flowing forelock tossed back over delicate ears rose above the mass of backs.

"Him, ma'am? He's probably the best colt you own; got the makin's of a fine horse, but he's a bad actor."

Just then the crowding of the horses broke into a milling and the sorrel came into full view. He was a beautiful beast with white stockings behind, deep chest, high withers, short, straight back.

"He's a beauty!" she declared. "He has bone and leg. He's gaunt now, but I suppose that's because he's been on the range. I like that square-hipped sort when you get strength without sacrificing looks."

"You're acquainted with horses somewhat, I take it."

"I've ridden some; hunted a little. Can you bring him out?"

Beck entered the corral and roped the horse. For an instant he resisted, head flung back and feet securely planted; then he came out of the bunch on a trot.

"He knows what a rope is. It don't take an intelligent creature, man or beast, long to learn."

The horse stood watching him suspiciously, ready to run if given the opportunity.

"Where shall we try him?" Jane asked.

"In the corral," he replied, and led the sorrel through the gate.

The colt, closely snubbed, stood trembling while the blanket was put on; then flinched and breathed loudly as the weight of the saddle was gently placed on his back. He stepped about and kicked as the cinch was drawn tight, and resisted for a long time the efforts of the man to slip a bit between his teeth.

Jane stood by watching, her attention divided between admiration of the man and

BECK CLOSED ON HIM, FINGERS LIKE STEEL GRIPPING THE READY WRIST. "DON'T TRY THAT WITH ME, YOU RAT!"

the horse. The former was assured, gentle, positive in every move; the latter alarmed and rebellious, but recognized the fact that he was under control.

"Now if you'll shorten the stirrups I'll try him," she said.

"*You'll* try him, ma'am? Why, this horse ain't been ridden three times in his life. He'll buck, and buck hard!"

"So much more reason why I should try him. We spoke of reputations last night; they can only be formed at the cost of knocks, physical as well as other sorts. There are many things I must try to do out here; there are bound to be some that I can't even try, but this is not one."

"But you—"

"Must I order you to let me ride him?"

There was no lightness in the question. She meant business, Beck realized; and her bruskness delighted him, for when he turned to give the cinch one more hitch—his only reply to her question—he was smiling.

It was not much of a ride, as Western riding goes. Beck blindfolded the sorrel with the black-silk scarf he wore about his

neck, helped Jane to mount, saw that she had both stirrups, took the rope cautiously from the trembling bronco's neck, and, at her nod, drew off the blind.

For a moment the great colt stood there as if bewildered. Then, with a grunt and a bound, he bowed his back, hung his head, and pitched.

"Keep his head up! His head!" warned Beck, watching with intense interest. "Watch him!"

The horse went straight forward for half a dozen jumps. Erect in the saddle, sitting too far back, trusting too much to her stirrups, Jane rode.

The violence of the lunging jerked her head unmercifully, but she had her balance —until he sunfished, with a wrenching movement that heaved her forward against the fork, dangerously near a fall.

"Grab it all!" called Beck, not remembering that his injunction to hang on was as Greek to her. "He—look out!"

With a vicious fling of his whole body the sorrel swapped ends, and as he came down, head toward the man, the girl shot into the air, turned completely over, and struck full on her back.

Beck ran to her, heedless of the horse, which circled at a gallop. She lay very still with her eyes closed; a smudge of dirt was on her white cheek. He knelt beside her.

"Are you hurt, ma'am?" he asked.

When she did not reply, he raised her head to his knee. Her body was surprisingly light, surprisingly firm, as he held it with an arm beneath her shoulders. He was fumbling with her collar to open it, his knuckles against her soft throat, when she opened her eyes and gasped and coughed. She tried to speak, but for a moment continued to choke; then smiled and said weakly: "I didn't—ride him."

"But you made a fine try!" he said with more enthusiasm than she had seen him display. "And I sure *am* glad you ain't hurt bad!"

She laughed feebly, and he felt her breath on his cheek, for their faces were very close. He felt his heart leap, too, and helped her up, saying words of which he was not conscious.

"I can stand alone," she said, after he had steadied her an interval; and reluctantly he took his arm from about her. "I'd like to try him again."

"But you're not going to—not to-day. I'm giving you that order"—with resolution. "I wouldn't want you to be hurt, ma'am. I—"

He checked himself, realizing that he had become very earnest and that she was looking straight into his eyes, reading the concern that was there.

There was talk of that ride in the bunkhouse when the men came in. Jimmy Oliver had seen from a distance, and asked Beck for the story. He related the incident rather lightly, and ended:

"Tried to keep her off him, but only got orders to take orders. If she breaks her neck tryin' some such tricks I wouldn't be surprised."

"She appears to have sand, though," Oliver commented, as if he were making a concession.

Others had opinions to pass, briefly and to the point. Those men were not given to accepting a stranger readily, and this stranger, being a woman, came to them under an added handicap. Where a man, inadept and showing the same courage, might have found himself quietly accepted, Jane's attempt at riding was not received with noticeable warmth. The performance was in her favor, and that was about all that could be said.

A close observer might have noticed that Tom Beck gave attention whenever another spoke of the new boss, as if deeply interested in what was said; yet when he spoke of her his manner was rather disparaging.

Mail had come in that afternoon, and—a happening without precedent—there were two letters for Two-Bits. The man, who could not write and whose reading was limited to brands, hardly ever received mail. Before he arrived there was speculation as to the writer of the one letter. Of the other there was no mystery, because each man of the outfit had received a similar envelope containing a circular from a boot-manufacturer.

Two-Bits arrived late, riding slowly toward the corral with his eyes on the ranch-house for a possible look at his fair employer.

"Mail for you, Two-Bits," Curtis remarked casually as he entered.

The others concealed their interest while Beck handed the letters to Two-Bits, who stood eying them gravely, striving to cover his surprise. This could not be done, though, for his agitated Adam's apple gave him away as he stood with a letter in each hand, looking from one to the other.

"I'll bet two bits somebody's dead," he said with concern, then walked to the window under a growing sense of importance at his deluge of correspondence.

He opened the letter which they knew contained the solicitation of the maker of boots, and all watched him as he stood scowling at it for minutes. He folded the sheet with a sigh, stuffed it, with the other letter, into a pocket, and walked thoughtfully to his bunk, where he sat down heavily, elbows on his knees. He shook his head sorrowfully and made a deprecatory clicking with his tongue.

"Boys, I always knowed that girl 'd turn out a bad one! It's awful—an' her mother a lady!"

For a moment their restraint held, and then their laughter cut loose with a roar. Curtis fell face down on his bunk and laughed until his entire length shook. Jimmy Oliver gasped for breath, his hands across his stomach. The others reeled about the floor or leaned against the walls, weak with mirth.

"It ain't nothin' to laugh at!" Two-Bits protested; but when he failed to convince them of the gravity he shammed, he rose, permitted an abashed grin to distort his freckled face, muttered something about feeding his horse, and walked out.

It was Saturday evening in a season of light work, and the social diversions of Ute Crossing had called H. C. riders. Hepburn departed early, and, after their horses had eaten, Beck and Two-Bits rode out of the ranch, townward bound. Out of sight of the building Two-Bits said:

"Tom, you know my eyes ain't very good. I'd like to get you to read this here other letter for me."

Beck knew that such confidence was a high compliment, for Two-Bits was sensitive over his educational shortcomings, so he took the letter and, after glancing down the single page, said:

"This is from the Rev. Azariah Beal."

"Oh, my gosh! That's my brother! What's the matter with him, Tom?"

The other read as follows:

"My dear brother:

"God willing, I shall visit you. I have often been impelled to renew our fraternal relationships, but my various charges have demanded my sole attention. Now, however, I am on a brief sojourn in the marts of trade, and my interests call me in your direction. I expect to arrive shortly after you receive this. May the Almighty guard and bless thee, and keep thee safe until our hands meet in the clasp of brotherly love."

"Oh, my gosh!" cried Two-Bits again, his Adam's apple leaping and his gray eyes, usually so mild, alight with enthusiasm. "He's comin' to visit me. Gosh, Tom, but he's a smart man! Ain't that elegant language? Say, he's the smartest man in our family, an' he's comin' clean from Texas to see me!"

"How long since you've seen him?"

"Oh, quite a while. Not since I was three years old."

"And how long ago was that?"

"You got me. I heard about him. He's a preacher. My, oh, my, but *she'll* like him. He's smart, like she is."

His manner was high elation and he spoke breathlessly. While they trotted on he chattered in his high voice, eulogizing the virtues of this brother whom he had not seen since infancy, regaling the other with long and vague tales of his accomplishments. Pressed for details, he could not offer them, because his knowledge of his relative had come to him verbally through the devious channels of the cattle country; but this did not shake his conviction that the Rev. Beal was peerless.

Tom's mind was not on the extravagant talk of Two-Bits. Curiously, it persisted in thinking of Jane Hunter.

Two days before he had thought this girl from the East a rattle-brained piece of inconsequence, with her selection of a foreman by the drawing of straws! Now he was not so sure that she did not possess at least several admirable qualities. He had offended her, gently bullied her, only last evening; he had sensed the waning of her own feeling of superiority; had understood that, behind her pique, she took to heart the things he had said—things which he had said not because he thought she should know them, but because he wanted to see how she would react to blunt truths.

She wanted something very badly. Not money; that had been a means. Perhaps it was that vague thing, herself, of which he had spoken. He did not understand, but he liked her determination. And what was this other stranger, this man, to her?

He put his horse into a lope with a queer misgiving. He was taking this woman seriously! He was saying slighting things about her and hoping that other men would speak about her highly! He had never

taken many things—particularly women—seriously before, and his experience with them had not been meager. It frightened him.

They dismounted before the saloon that adjoined the hotel, eased their cinches, and approached the doorway.

In the shadow of the next building two men were talking. Beck eyed the figures closely. One, he knew, was Hepburn; the other, from the intonation of his cautiously lowered voice, he took to be Pat Webb, the rancher of whom he had spoken to Jane Hunter, telling her that his presence in the country was not an asset for her.

He went inside, rather absorbed. Sam McKee was there, one of Webb's riders, the one on whom Beck had inflicted terrible punishment for cruelty to a horse. McKee looked away, a nasty light playing across his gray eyes, but Beck did not even give him a glance. What was Hepburn doing in close talk with Webb? he asked himself. For years Webb had been under suspicion as a thief and a friend of the lawless. Colonel Hunter had never trusted him, and now the foreman of the H. C. was talking with him secretly.

A moment later Hepburn entered and lounged up to the bar, and shortly afterward Webb came in. He was a small man with sharp features and bright, buttonlike eyes, which roved restlessly. His skin was mottled, his lips hard and cruel.

Webb ordered a drink and glanced about, eying Beck and Two-Bits with a suggestive smile. He drank with a swagger and wiped his lips with a sharp smack, still smiling as if some unpleasant thought amused him.

A man at the far end of the bar moved closer to Hepburn.

"How's the new boss?" he said with a grin.

Hepburn replied, in his benevolent manner, that he believed she would do very well.

Others, interested, came closer, and more questions followed. Then Webb broke in:

"I shouldn't think that you H. C. waddies 'uld be in town nights any more."

The talk stopped, for Webb, unsavory as to reputation, was still a figure in the country, and his manner as he spoke was laden with significance.

"How's that, Webb?" Hepburn asked.

"How's that?" the other mocked. "I've seen her—ain't that enough? There's only two reasons why men want to come to this hole nights; one's booze, an' the other's women. You can carry your booze out home, an'—"

He went on with his blackguard inference, and when he had ended a laugh went up—a ribald, obscene, barroom laugh. It had reached its height when Tom Beck, whose eyes had been on Hepburn as Webb gave voice to his insult, elbowed the foreman from his way and faced the one who had occasioned that laugh.

There was in his manner a quality which caught attention like nippers. He stood, forcing Webb to look into his threatening face a quiet instant. Then he spoke.

"That's a lie!" he said quietly.

The bantering smile swept from the other's face and his mouth drew down in a slanting snarl.

"What's a lie?"

"What you said is a lie, Webb, and you're a liar—"

The smaller man's hand whipped to his holster, but Beck, breaking short, closed on him, fingers like steel gripping the ready wrist.

"Don't try that with me, you rat!"

With a steady pull he lifted the resisting hand, gripping the gun, away from the man's side, while Webb struggled, cursing as he found himself unable to resist that strength.

"Give me that gun!"

Beck wrenched the weapon free. The group had drawn back, and behind him Sam McKee made a quick movement. Two-Bits, beside him, dropped his hand to his hip and muttered:

"Keep out of this!"

McKee, hate flickering in his face, subsided without protest, as a craven will.

Tom broke the gun, and the cartridges scattered on the floor. He closed it with a snap and sent it spinning down the bar, clear to the far end. His eyes had not left Webb's face.

"You're a liar," he said again quietly. "You're a liar, and you're going to tell all the boys here that you're a liar."

"Don't tell me I lie!"—retreating a step as Beck's body swayed toward him.

"You lied," Tom continued quietly, though his voice was not just steady. His hands were clenched, and he held them slightly before his body, as if yearning for opportunity to seize upon and injure the other.

"What is it to you, anyhow, if—"

"It's this to me, Webb—it makes me want to strangle the foul breath in your throat! That's what it is to me, and before these boys I will if you don't swallow your own dirty words, just to get their taste. I don't want to be a killer, even over such as you are, but you've got me mad. We don't know and nobody else knows how this girl's goin' to make it in this country, but by God, Webb, she's goin' to have a fair chance! There ain't going to be any rotten talk that ain't called for, and it ain't called for—yet. I expect I'd get into trouble if I killed you for this. There's just one chance for me to keep out of trouble, and that's for you to say you lied!"

He moved closer as Webb retreated slowly, his spurs ringing ever so slightly, yet the sound was audible in the stillness.

"Say it!" he insisted lowly. "Say it, you whelp!"

Webb's face had gone from red to the color of suet, and the blotches stood sharply out against the pallor. His dirty assurance was beaten down, and before this man he was frightened—and enraged at his own fright.

"Mebby I spoke too quick—"

"You lied! Nothin' short of that! Say you lied and say it now—quick!"

He half lurched forward, lifting his eager, vengeful hands, when Webb relaxed and gave a short, half laugh and said:

"Have it your own way. I lied, I guess. I didn't mean—"

"That 'll do, Webb. You've said all that's necessary."

He stood back and dropped his hands limply to his sides, eying the other with dying wrath. His gaze then went to Hepburn and clung there a moment, eloquent of contempt.

"You're her foreman," he might as well have said. "Why didn't *you* take this up?"

Then he moved to the bar and asked for a drink. Constrained talk arose. Webb sulkily recovered his gun and stood close to Sam McKee, drinking. From the doorway which led into the hotel office Dick Hilton turned back, whistling low to himself—a speculative whistle.

Tom Beck rode home alone, hours before he had intended to leave town. Why had he done that? Always he had disliked Webb, but why had this thing roused in him such tremendous rage? he asked himself, as he unsaddled.

He laughed softly to himself, as if he had done something ridiculous; then he strolled down toward the creek and stood under the cottonwoods a long interval, watching a lighted chamber window.

"You're a queer little yellow-head," he said aloud to that window. "You're the kind that gets men into trouble, but maybe you're worth it, a lot of it."

He stood for some time, until his wrath had wholly gone and the mood which sent merriment dancing in his eyes had returned. It had been a day of understanding. He had broken down the barrier of deceit which Hepburn had attempted to build; he had come to understand that there was something strange in the pursuit of Jane Hunter by Dick Hilton; he had understood that in his employer there was at least a physical courage which was promising; he had humiliated Webb and given the whole country to understand that there should be no doubting of the new girl's reputation.

Of those, the only one now giving him concern was the attitude of the foreman. His suspicion was strong, his evidence wholly inadequate.

Tom stood beside his bunk for a time. He had thrown down his gauntlet; he had taken a chance. He might, from now on, face danger or humiliation, but he experienced a relief at knowledge that so far as he was concerned there was no longer anything under cover. He did not fear Hepburn or Webb—not so far as his own safety went; but there were other things, he told himself. What *was* up? Just what game would Hepburn play, if any? And who was that man from the East? To what was Jane's confusion due that afternoon? Was it only embarrassment?

He dozed off and woke with a start. Again he felt the weight of her body on his arm, again the warmth of her breath on his cheek. He lay there with his heart hammering. Then, with a growl, he rolled over and went to sleep.

He could sleep well that night! But other nights were coming when he would ponder the significance of Hilton, when the cloud which he then saw vaguely over Jane Hunter's future would be real and appalling, when he would actually feel her body in his arms, when her warm breath would mingle with her warm tears on his cheek, when he would hope that death might come to him as a tribute to her.

(*To be continued in the November number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

The Arab in Peace and in War

THE DOWNFALL OF TURKEY AND THE RISE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEDJAZ PROMISE TO BRING A NEW ERA FOR AN ANCIENT ORIENTAL RACE WHICH ONCE SPREAD ITS EMPIRE FROM PERSIA TO SPAIN

By Frederic Austin Ogg

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AFTER the several Allied nations had received their allotments of seats in the peace conference at Paris, and the roster of members was thought complete, it was discovered that in the rush of decisions, one belligerent with an unimpeachable claim had been overlooked.

Breaking into revolt against Turkey in 1915, winning recognition as a cobelligerent from England and France in 1916, contributing powerfully to General Allenby's brilliant successes in Palestine and Syria in 1917 and 1918, the comparatively small but proud and aspiring Arabian kingdom of Hedjaz was able, in 1919, to make quite as good a case for representation in the peace council as Czechoslovakia or Poland.

When Prince Feisul and his colleague presented themselves at the conference table, they found that they must be content to sit with the lowly. Their right-hand neighbor was the delegate of Guatemala, their left-hand neighbor the representative of Liberia, but it was something to be represented at all, and especially by two delegates—as many as were allotted to Greece, Portugal, Roumania, or any of the British self-governing dominions.

The backwash of the war swept the whole of western Asia, from Scutari and Smyrna to Bosra and Herat. English and Australian soldiers poured from Egypt into Palestine over a route almost identical with that of the Hebrew Exodus. Russian armies, eastward-bound, moved along the historic line of retreat of Xenophon's Ten Thousand, and descended through Persia by roads trodden by the hosts of Cyrus and Alexander. The mounds along the Tigris which have in part yielded, but in large part still cover, the remains of the civilization that arose in Mesopotamia thousands of years ago, stand gashed with trenches and reddened with British, Indian, Arab, and Turkish blood. Atop the very bulwark at Babylon which tradition associates with the Tower of Babel, a wireless station was in operation practically throughout the conflict.

The reception of two full-blooded Arab diplomats at Paris on equal terms with the statesmen of western lands was a dramatic incident, indicative of two impending developments of the greatest moment to the entire world—to London and Washington, to Paris, Rome, Berlin, and Petrograd, to Delhi, Peking, and Tokyo. The first is the break-up of Asiatic Turkey; the second, the extension thither—to Syria, to Palestine, to Mesopotamia, to Arabia—of western influences such as have at no time been exerted there since the Roman Empire was in its prime.

THE BREAKING UP OF TURKEY

The events by which Turkey in Europe was contracted, by 1914, to a bare eleven thousand square miles westward from Constantinople, and by which Turkey in Africa was finally obliterated, were paralleled by the rise of a whole set of claims which, if realized, would have reduced the Sultan's dominions in Asia to one-fourth of their existing proportions. Great Britian looked to Mesopotamia, France to Syria, Russia to the Straits and Armenia, Italy to Adalia,

HUSSEIN IBN ALI, SHERIF OF MECCA, AND KING OF THE NEW ARABIAN STATE OF HEDJAZ

From a photograph by the International Film Service, New York

Greece to Smyrna; and in 1916 a series of secret conventions among the Allies made a prospective division on these lines.

Subsequent developments—the collapse of Russia, the reaction against secret diplomacy, the rise of the doctrine of the mandatory—made it impracticable to carry out such a plan. But at all stages of the peace discussions of 1918-1919 it was taken for granted that, whatever might eventually be done with each or all of the several regions in question, Turkish sovereignty should be forever terminated wherever the populations are predominantly non-Turkish —that is to say, in far the larger part of the fallen empire.

The Turkish defeat means, however, not simply transfers of political allegiance. It means, for a great section of the world, the modernization of life and of institutions. Time was when it could be said of the East that—

> She let the legions thunder past,
> And plunged in thought again.

But it is no longer so. The legions do not thunder past. They stop and conquer and rule. And not merely the legions, for the railroad, the telegraph, the telephone, sewing-machines and typewriters, books and periodicals, wireless service, schools, colleges, disruptive ideas and molding influences—all work together to bring the merest illiterate of Syria, Mesopotamia, or Arabia under the spell of a civilization that changes the habit of thought, the outlook, and the very tissue of life.

The transformation was going on before the war; but it was powerfully impeded by the iron hand of Turkish administrative control. Henceforth, the pace will be quickened. Under independence, substantial or complete, great bodies of people—Armenians, Syrians, Arabs, and others—will have their first real opportunity in centuries to turn their genius to the achievement of political and economic well-being.

They will not become Westerners. East will ever be East and West West; but they will come within the world's great civilized and progressing community, very much as the Slavs of eastern Europe came into that community in the century following Peter the Great.

Vast results, now but dimly discernible, must follow; for, as a recent writer has said, "the lands between the Ægean and the Nile on the one hand, and the Caucasus and the mountain buttresses of Persia on the other, are strategically a pivot on which world-issues swing, while immeasurable possibilities lie undeveloped in their human and material resources, and, above all, in their spiritual capacities."

Largest, most populous, remotest, and most independent among the former Turkish subject lands in Asia is Arabia; and the fact that this country alone—or, rather, a part of it—among the liberated regions of the eastern continent was admitted to a voice in the peace conference, raises a special interest in both its past and its prospects.

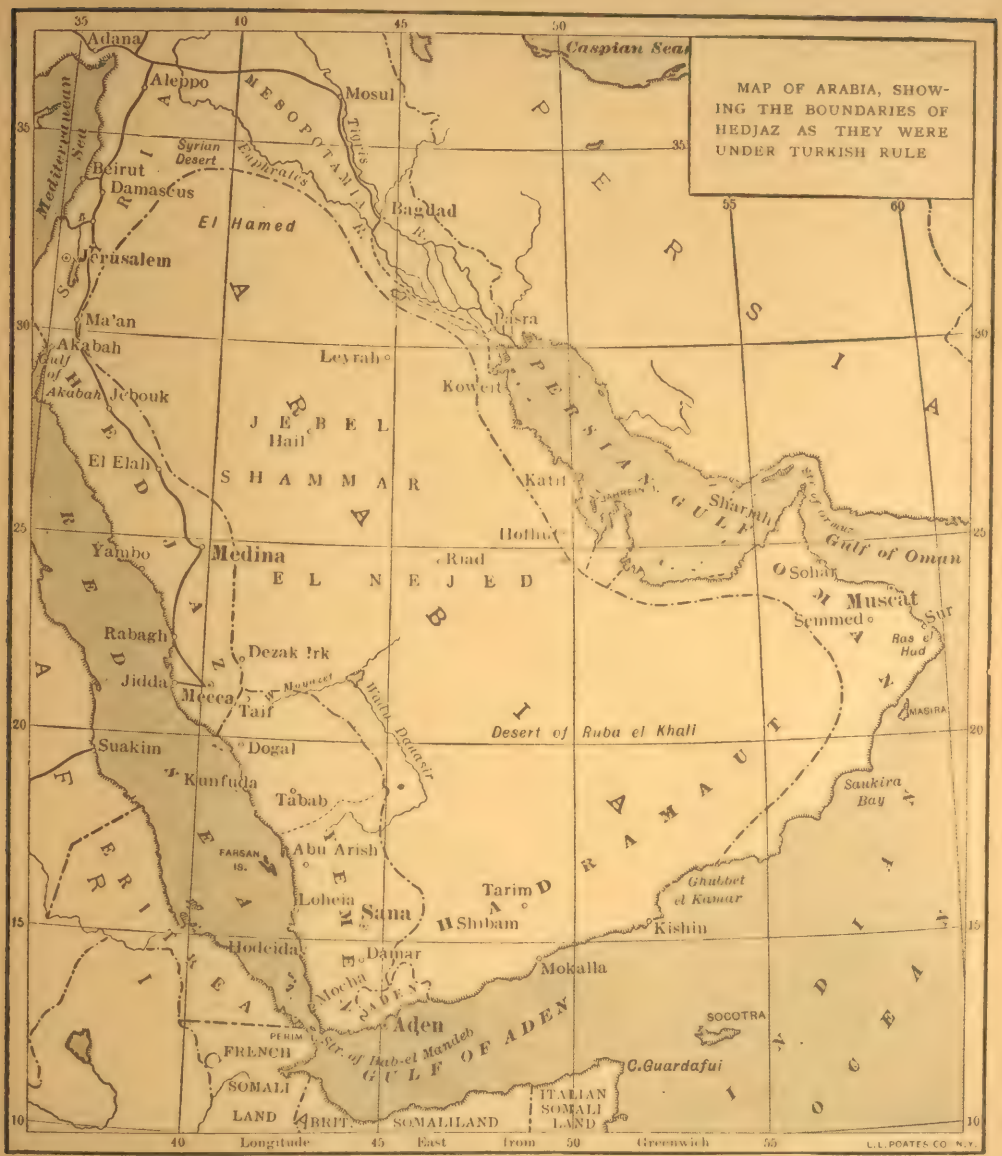
THE GREAT PENINSULA OF ARABIA

Taken as a whole, Arabia is a gigantic quadrangular peninsula, four times the size of France, more than twenty times the size of the State of New York. Situated where the life-streams of three continents meet, it is none the less unusually inaccessible; its own people have aptly called it Jazirat-al-Arab—that is, the island of the Arabs. On the north it is separated from Syria and Mesopotamia by trackless deserts. Its four thousand miles of coast-line, from Basra round the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea to Port Said, affords scarcely one good inlet or harbor.

Topographically, the country is a vast table-land, tilted up at its southwest corner, and sloping gently downward to the northeast, toward the Syrian desert and the low-lying plains of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Mountain chains paralleling the Red Sea northward from the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb cause the premature precipitation of the moisture brought from the Indian Ocean by the southwest monsoon, with the result that the interior is almost rainless.

A full third of the country is silent, stark, irredeemable desert, where sand and sun glare sullenly at one another, and across whose vast solitudes of black gravel and red sand no living thing moves. The rest of the land, for the most part, supports only men who wander with their flocks, seeking the scanty grasses, the thorn-bushes, and the cactus, that fight a losing battle against the choking sand and the withering sunshine.

There are, however, favored spots—oases in the parched interior, linked one to another by tenuous camel-routes, and watered districts of considerable extent adjacent to the coasts. Such a district is Oman, bordering the gulf of that name. Another is Yemen, in the extreme south-



west, the Arabia Felix of history, the home of that illustrious Arab, the Queen of Sheba, and even yet an opulent land whence is carried on a lively traffic in dates, fabrics, and other forms of merchandise. Northward from Yemen lies Hedjaz, fertile in the south, but farther north, as the altitude diminishes, rapidly becoming sterile.

Of the early history of the Arab people, little indeed is known. "Nothing," admits the best of the native historians, "is more obscure." However, it is clear that the country was always populated by a Semitic race, akin to the Jews; and the original seat of civilization, so far as history records, was the fertile uplands of Yemen, whence, through the centuries proceeded a steady migration northeastward to the fruitful plains of Mesopotamia northwestward across the Sinai peninsula to the grain-fields of the Nile, and yet farther northward to the vine-clad, olive-bearing hills of Syria. This age-long migration brought the men of pure Arab blood among Egyptians, Syrians, Jews, and other folk, producing such intermixture that already at Mohammed's time, in the seventh century, the name "Arab" had no very clear meaning.

Thereafter the dispersion proceeded on a larger scale and over a wider field. Under able and ambitious generals, Arab armies poured forth out of the peninsula, bent up-

PRINCE FEISUL, THIRD SON OF THE KING OF HEDJAZ, AND CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ARABS AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

From a photograph supplied by the International Film Service, New York

on the conquest of the world for the new faith. Persia was subdued in 634. Syria was overrun in 636. Egypt was taken in 641. By 650 the Moslem arms reached Armenia and Asia Minor, and from Egypt penetrated as far westward as Carthage. Before the close of the century conquest was carried to the Atlantic, and in 711 the crescent was planted in Spain. Only the failure of successive assaults upon Constantinople and the checking of the western advance by Charles Martel, at Tours, in 732, seem to have prevented the subjugation of the known world.

Internal dissensions, quite as much as defeats suffered by the armies, prevented the

A GROUP OF ARAB MAGNATES—IN THE CENTER IS THE EMIR YAZBEK, ON THE RIGHT FAIF BEY, AND ON THE LEFT EL AZNI, THE SON OF A FORMER DEPUTY OF DAMASCUS WHO WAS HANGED BY THE TURKS

building up of a great united Arabic empire. Rival califates arose in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Spain; and as these, in time, declined, great regions that had been gained fell away completely. There continued to be many people of Arab birth or descent in North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia, and all of these regions remained—as they remain to-day—predominantly Mohammedan; but Arab political power was more and more closely circumscribed.

The main losses were to the Ottoman Turks, a barbarous central Asiatic people, who in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries poured into the lands of the Near East and wrested control from Arab, Christian, and Jew alike. In 1517—sixty-four years after the fall of Constantinople—the Sultan Selim I, having conquered Egypt, was solemnly presented by the Sherif of Mecca with the keys of the city, and was recognized not only as the spiritual head of Islam, but as the temporal sovereign of the Hedjaz. Yemen similarly submitted; and the long, dreary era of Turkish misrule was begun.

From this point the history of Arabia becomes largely a story of native revolts and of ineffectual Turkish efforts to maintain control—or, rather, to gain control, for there never was a time when the Sultan's authority was universally, or even widely, acknowledged. Even in the provinces of Hedjaz and Yemen, where the Turkish administrative system was most fully installed, the power of the governors-general and their subordinates never extended far beyond the garrisoned towns.

From 1892 to 1906, Yemen was almost continuously in rebellion. Elsewhere Turkish control was only nominal. Revenues were intermittently collected, but were usually more than offset by subsidies granted the Bedouin chieftains in the vain effort to keep them quiet.

THE HEDJAZ RAILROAD

Shortly before 1900, the " Red " Sultan, Abdul Hamid II, conceived a plan which

ARAB SOLDIERS ENTERING DAMASCUS WHEN THE TURKS SURRENDERED THE SYRIAN CAPITAL TO GENERAL ALLENBY IN SEPTEMBER, 1918

he believed would lead to real control over his disaffected Arab subjects. This was to build a railroad southward from Damascus, making easier the transportation of troops and supplies into the rebellious regions, and incidentally enabling armed forces to be moved quickly northward in case of danger closer to the capital. The strategic object of the enterprise was kept in the background, and it was given out that the proposed road was for the benefit of Mohammedan pilgrims, whose journeys to and from the holy cities of Medina and Mecca had been arduous and dangerous.

Announcing the project, in 1900, as a national and indeed a sacred work, the Turkish government required all officials of the empire, whether Moslem or Christian, to contribute one month's salary to the cost, and followers of the Prophet everywhere were invited to assist. Some fifteen million dollars was raised, and in May, 1901, the construction of a narrow-gage line—commonly known as the Hedjaz Railroad—was begun. The old pilgrim route was followed; and as the country traversed is mainly level desert, no serious engineering difficulties were encountered.

The first section, covering the two hundred and eighty-five miles from Damascus to Maan, was opened in 1904. In 1906, the line was completed to El Akhdar, four hundred and seventy miles from Damascus and three hundred and fifty from Medina, in time to be used by the pilgrim caravan of that year. Two years later, Medina itself, the scene of Mohammed's death, was reached.

The stretch of two hundred and eighty miles from Medina to Mecca was not yet

complete when the great war began; and considerable portions of the road north of Medina were destroyed by the natives in 1916-1918 in order to prevent the transport of Turkish troops. Even before 1914, however, the military value of the line to the Sultan's government had been demonstrated; and in the background lay a live German interest, for the obvious reason that the Hedjaz road promised to become simply a great spur of the Bagdad Railway, linking up with that famous artery of empire at Aleppo.

THE UNCONQUERABLE ARAB

Notwithstanding Turkish efforts to bring him under control, and despite his numerous contacts with other peoples, the Arab still stands a dignified, if not indeed a majestic, figure.

"He has for certainly four thousand years," says a recent writer, "and probably for a longer period, wandered from his home to Asia and Africa, mingling with the Chinese, the Indian, the Turk, the Greek, the Jew, and the African. He has intermarried with most of these peoples; yet he has throughout kept his racial identity unbroken and essentially without alloy. During those forty centuries a score of emperors and kings from Persia, Assyria, and Babylonia, from Greece and Rome, from Constantinople and Egypt, have fought with him and have attempted to oppress him; but he has remained to this day untamable and independent. He has often been beaten in battle, but never conquered. No yoke has yet been fitted to his shoulders; no religion or civilization has been able to corrode his elemental powers."

A STREET SCENE IN JEDDA, OR JIDDA, A PORT ON THE RED SEA COAST OF HEDJAZ, AND THE LANDING-PLACE FOR MECCA, THE CAPITAL OF THE NEW KINGDOM

A STREET SCENE IN THE TOWN OF YAMBO, THE LANDING-PLACE FOR MEDINA—THE MOUNTED MEN ARE OFFICERS OF THE CAVALRY FORCES OF THE KING OF HEDJAZ

The world war brought the Arab his great opportunity—namely, to free himself once for all from the Turkish claims of dominion. Desire for such relief was deep-seated in every Arab breast; for, notwithstanding their common Islamic faith, the two peoples never got on well together. It was not simply a case of temperamental incompatibility. The Turkish rule was as ill-founded as it was inefficient and cruel. It was the rule of a heartless minority, maintained by craft and by the sword.

Of twenty-one million subjects of the Sultan in 1914, only seven millions were Turks. A million and a half were Greeks, a million and a half Armenians, a million and a half Kurds, nine millions were Arabs. No Ottoman Turkish population was to be found east of Asia Minor. Most of the inhabitants of Syria and Mesopotamia, as well as of Arabia proper, were Arabs.

Culturally, too, the Turks were inferior to all, save perhaps the Kurds. The Arabs have a civilization which was old and illustrious when the Ottomans were yet barbaric marauders in central Asia; they have a literature from which almost all the scanty Turkish intellectual possessions of the present day were drawn. They feel themselves, and rightly, the mental superiors of those who have assumed to rule over them.

The situation was bad before the Turkish revolution of 1908, and after that event it grew much worse. Under the old régime, the government at Constantinople proceeded on the principle that sovereignty, power, imperial politics, were the exclusive

MAP OF THE CALIFATE, OR EMPIRE OF THE SUCCESSORS OF MOHAMMED. AT THE HEIGHT OF THE POWER OF THE ARABS—IT WILL BE SEEN THAT IN THE EAST THE ARABS CONQUERED PERSIA AND TOOK SYRIA AND ARMENIA FROM THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE—IN THE WEST THEIR ADVANCE REACHED ITS HIGH-WATER MARK AT TOURS, IN CENTRAL FRANCE, WHERE THEY WERE DEFEATED BY CHARLES MARTEL IN 732

A CAMEL DETACHMENT OF THE ARAB FORCES NEAR KERAK, AT THE SOUTH END OF THE DEAD SEA, WHERE THERE WAS SEVERE FIGHTING WITH THE TURKS

From a copyrighted photograph by the Press Illustrating Service, New York

business of the Turks, while the internal affairs of the non-Turkish communities were the concern of those communities alone. The Young Turks changed all that. They set up a constitution admitting non-Turks to at least a theoretical share in the management of imperial affairs; and for this they thought, no doubt honestly, that they were entitled to the name of democrats. But they also took as their ideal a homogeneous Ottoman state, based upon the absolute supremacy of the Turkish language and culture, and they at once set about realizing it by starting, after the most drastic methods, to "Ottomanize" all the non-Turkish races of the empire.

THE ARAB NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

What this meant for the Christian peoples of European Turkey and of Ar-

ONE OF THE FAMOUS MOSLEM SHRINES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEDJAZ—THE TOMB OF EVE, NEAR JEDDA

MECCA, CAPITAL OF THE NEW KINGDOM OF HEDJAZ, AND CHIEF OF THE HOLY CITIES OF THE MOSLEM WORLD—HERE MOHAMMED WAS BORN IN OR ABOUT THE YEAR 570—THE OPEN SPACE SURROUNDED BY COLONNADES IS THE MASJID AL HARAM, OR GREAT MOSQUE, IN THE CENTER OF WHICH IS THE VENERATED KAABA, A CUBICAL STONE BUILDING COVERED WITH A BLACK CLOTH

TYPICAL COAST SCENERY OF THE HEDJAZ—PALM-TREES ON THE SHORE OF THE GULF OF AKABAH. AT THE NORTH END OF THE RED SEA

From a copyrighted photograph by the Press Illustrating Service, New York

menia the world well knows. For the Arabs and other Moslem subjects it meant less actual hardship; yet its whole effect was to rouse them to mutinous wrath and to make more implacable foes of Turkish power than before. The upshot was that, even before 1914, an Arab "separatist" or "nationalist" movement commanded attention from English and other Western statesmen.

"What is prematurely called the Arab movement," said a French writer shortly before the outbreak of the great war, "is as yet not more than the expression of local tendencies with no concordance between them."

This was entirely true. The ultimate test of nationality is that the people in whose behalf nationality is asserted feel themselves to be one nation. Unquestionably this test could not be met by the scattered, independent, and jealous Arab tribes of 1914; it is doubtful whether it could be met now, although in Arabia, as elsewhere, nationalistic feeling has been powerfully stimulated by the war.

Long before 1914, however, there was in Arabia a nationalist party, just as there was a nationalist party in Egypt, in India, and indeed in most of the world's great political dependencies. More modest spokesmen of this group—for example Nedjib Azouri, author of a book entitled "The Revival of the Arab Nation"—had in mind, at least for the present, only the unification and liberation of the Arabs of the Ottoman Empire. Others were more ambitious, for the new Arabia was to embrace all the peoples speaking Arabic dialects from Bagdad to Morocco.

Such a Pan-Arabic state seems in the highest degree chimerical. It could be founded only by a power able to wrest Egypt from the British Empire, Tripoli from Italy, and Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco from France; and it could acquire stability only from the growth of a community of feeling which is to-day utterly non-existent. In the long look ahead, none the less, the unification of the Arab world on broad lines is a possibility interesting to contemplate.

The principal seat of nationalistic sentiment was the vilayet of Hedjaz; and there it was that, after Turkey entered the war in November, 1914, and after it became

apparent that the "holy war," proclaimed two weeks later, was not going to materialize, the lead was taken in throwing off the Turkish yoke. Hedjaz parallels the Red Sea for a distance of some seven hundred miles, but has nowhere a breadth of more than two hundred miles. It is one of the least inviting sections of the country, yet is the most important of all because of containing, at Medina and Mecca, the principal shrines of the Moslem world. Its ruler, who bore the title of Sherif of Mecca, was, until 1916, the governor under the Turks—a native prince, claiming de-

TYPICAL SCENERY IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE KINGDOM OF HEDJAZ—THIS REGION HAS NOT SUFFICIENT RAINFALL FOR AGRICULTURE, AND IS INHABITED BY NOMADIC TRIBES OF BEDOUIN ARABS

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

scent from the Prophet himself, and head of a family that for nine hundred years has been the guardian of the holy relics, yet an agent perforce of the hated Ottoman overlord.

FORMATION OF THE KINGDOM OF HEDJAZ

From the beginning of 1915, Turkish atrocities—including the execution of hundreds of Arabs in Syria who were accused of connection with secret societies organized to work for independence—caused increasing restlessness throughout Arabia; and in the following year, the Sherif Hussein ibn Ali sent word to the English that he could no longer stand by and witness the destruction of the Arab people at Ottoman hands. He asked for guns, food, and money, and without even waiting to receive them broke into open rebellion.

Then followed a series of operations which not even the Titanic engagements on the European fronts quite obscured from the world's gaze. First Jedda, or Jidda, the port nearest Mecca, was seized, so that supplies furnished by the Entente powers could be brought in. Then the Turkish garrison at Mecca was broken up; whereupon the sherif made bold to proclaim the independence of all Arabia, and to assume the title of King of Hedjaz.

Medina offered a more serious obstacle. There the Turks filled the Prophet's tomb with explosives, and made known their intention to blow the shrine to pieces if attacked. The plan worked. Not a shot was fired, and the city remained in Turkish hands until after the armistice was signed. It was completely isolated, and its retention had only a sentimental value; but its civilian population was scattered to the four winds, and its palaces and gardens were left to fall into decay.

Within a year a series of short, sharp campaigns carried on by the king's sons, under the general direction of the third son, Prince Feisul—later the chief representative of his country at Paris—freed Hedjaz completely from Turks, except at Medina. This, however, was but a beginning. The British were planning the liberation of Palestine and Syria by a series of movements paralleling the campaign of General Maude in Mesopotamia; and into this undertaking, Prince Feisul threw himself with undiminished ardor.

Syria is regarded by the Arabs as in every sense an Arab country, albeit some of its people are Christians and all live more settled lives. There is no word for "Syria" in the Arab tongue. Hence the breaking of the power of the Turk in the northern land was regarded by the Arab as merely a part of the one great task of liberating the Arab world.

However, to rally the local tribes for the overthrow of the petty Turkish garrisons in Hedjaz was one thing, and to raise a disciplined, coherent army for a distant expedition was quite another. The Bedouin is unaccustomed to discipline, disinclined to wander far from his home deserts and oases, and unfit for sustained operations. Hence the army that Feisul gathered is said to have been recruited largely from the peasantry of Syria and Mesopotamia, reenforced by numerous Arab deserters from the armies of the enemy.

In July, 1917, Akabah, at the shoulder of the Sinai peninsula, was taken, and the Arab forces became the right wing of the expeditionary army which General Allenby was leading out of Egypt for the new conquest of the Holy Land. In the remarkable campaign that followed the Arabs bore a share at every stage; wherever the standard of Prince Feisul was carried, the local Arab inhabitants rose to greet and assist the liberators. Beersheba was taken in October, Gaza and Joppa in November, Jerusalem in December, Jericho in February.

Throughout the long, hot summer of 1918, while General Allenby stubbornly held his line against the large Turkish force entrenched in the Samarian hills, Arab raiding-parties repeatedly cut the Hedjaz Railroad and in other ways made trouble for the enemy; and in September, when heavy operations were resumed and the main Turkish force was trapped by an encircling movement of the British cavalry, the Arabs were in the thick of the fighting. Thereafter, the Turks were quickly reduced to utter helplessness. Acre, Damascus, Beirut, Rayak, Aleppo—all were easily taken, and every rail connection that could avail for the bringing in of supplies was cut. At the end of October the demoralized Ottomans sought and obtained an armistice, which amounted to nothing less than an unconditional surrender. Two weeks later Germany, Turkey's last hope, acknowledged that the game was up.

The century-long dream of the Arab was

AN ARAB GIRL MILKING THE GOATS, WITH AN ARMED WATCHMAN IN THE BACKGROUND—THEIR FLOCKS OF GOATS PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THE DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF THE NOMADIC ARAB TRIBES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

realized; Turkish power was prostrate, and his country was free. What of the future?

A NEW ERA FOR THE ARABS

Two facts in the situation were obvious. The first was that, as General Allenby frankly acknowledged in his official report, the Arabs had been of large assistance to the Allies in their Eastern campaigns. The second was that the King of Hedjaz and his sons had displayed a high order of intelligence, integrity, and even statesmanship. From these facts sprang a very substantial claim upon the Allies for considerate treatment—a claim which was to a degree acknowledged by the admission of Prince Feisul and his colleague to the peace conference.

ARAB WOMEN MAKING BUTTER—THE CHURN, MADE OF GOATSKINS, IS HALF FILLED WITH GOATS' MILK, BLOWN UP WITH AIR LIKE A FOOTBALL, AND MADE TIGHT—THE WOMEN THEN SHAKE IT ABOUT UNTIL BUTTER FORMS INSIDE IT

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

In advance of the conference, indeed, Great Britain and France committed themselves unequivocally to a policy of self-determination for all the newly liberated subjects of the Sultan. A formal announcement of November 7, 1918, ran thus:

> The aim of France and Great Britain in carrying on in the Near East the war let loose by Germany's ambitions is the complete and final liberation of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks, and the establishment of governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and the free choice of the native populations.

The covenant of the League of Nations goes a step farther:

> Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached a stage of development in which their existence as independent nations can be provisionally recognized, subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a mandatory power until such time as they are able to stand alone. The wishes of these communities must be a principal consideration in the selection of the mandatory power.

The future of the vast Arabian peninsula lies as yet in the lap of the gods. The secret treaties of 1916 contemplated a con-

federation of Arab governments, or possibly a single Arab government, under the protection of Great Britain and France; and such an arrangement may yet come about.

Certain it is that for the time being, at all events, the inhabitants have attained an unprecedented degree of unity. For the first time, so far as we know, since the seventh century, there is universal peace. Union, however, is not likely to seem to the chieftains and tribesmen any more essential now that the Turkish tyranny is broken than it was in the days of a common enslavement; and one may venture the prophecy that the maximum of solidarity attained in the near future will be represented by a loose league of independent tribal states, possibly under the nominal, and altogether logical, headship of the chief custodian of the sacred places, the Sherif of Mecca, or King of Hedjaz, and probably under the protection of either Great Britain or an international authority.

The disposition to be made of Syria and Mesopotamia is equally uncertain. The question of Syria turns largely on the claims of the French. The Syrians themselves want independence, while French imperialists clamor for the erection of *la Syrie intégrale* into a French colony. Moderate French opinion demands, at the least, that France be made the mandatory for the country. Prince Feisul, representing Hedjaz, and also speaking for a triumphant army of Syrian Arabs, asks for Syrian independence under a temporary mandatory, preferably the United States, or, if that is impossible, either Great Britain or France.

French interest in Syria is based partly on a sentimental tradition dating from the Crusades, partly on a long-standing protectorate over the Christian population there, and partly on a lively commercial intercourse. In days of yore, when annexations followed wars as night follows day, Syria would have become French as a matter of course. Under the changed conditions, a mandatory is probably the most that the Quai d'Orsay can expect.

Mesopotamia and the region stretching beyond Bagdad to the Persian Gulf are earmarked for England. Within a year, it is true, a sober English writer proposed that the region northward from Bagdad should be recognized as a sphere of influence of Germany; but such an arrangement is now inconceivable, and no other power besides England has a shadow of a claim.

The English interest arises obviously from the region's proximity to the English "sphere" around the Persian Gulf, and from the ill-defined English "influence" in southern Persia and northeastern Arabia. Here again the covenant of the League of Nations contemplates autonomy, checked by the surveillance of a mandatory. The mandatory could hardly fail to be England.

The future of Mesopotamia is peculiarly a matter of interest to us all. Here lies one of the world's great undeveloped farms—a wondrously rich region, utterly neglected under Turkish misrule, but capable of being transformed almost overnight into a gigantic wheat-field. Such a transformation would make of the land a source of substantial relief from the shortage of foodstuffs from which the world, even before the war, was suffering. Less than three years of English occupation has, indeed, already turned the lower stretches of the country into something resembling a paradise.

THE PATH OF FRIENDSHIP

A BOX-EDGED footpath runs between
  Two stately houses that I know.
Its bricks are warped, and tufts of green
  In little rain-washed crannies grow;
For now it feels no tripping feet
That speed on friendship's errands sweet.

And yet to those indoors, grown old,
  The pathway still true pleasure gives,
For shades of time are upward rolled
  When each looks where the other lives;
And lo, the youth of days gone by
Across the path between them fly.

Marion Hicks Dexter

The Ghost Book

BY CLARENCE MEILY

Illustrated by George E. Wolfe

THE bright sunlight of an April morning fell through the tall, half-curtained windows directly across Mr. Wombold's breakfast-table, placed just in front of the friendly recess of the bay window. Outside a rose-garden filled the air with puffs of perfume that drifted lazily through the half-raised sash. The table was set for two, Mr. Wombold having lately formed the practise of breakfasting with his secretary, Miss Armitage. At the master's place lay the morning papers neatly folded by Otu, his man servant.

The room was empty as Mr. Wombold entered. He was a tall man whom accumulated years had bowed, lean with the fleshlessness of age, with scant white hair fringing a high, narrow forehead. Deep-set eyes full of absent brooding, angular features touched upon their bony prominences with a pinkish pallor, a mobile mouth withered by time, all served to fix the impression of a recluse who had not so much renounced the world as wearied of it. He was dressed with care, even daintiness, yet moved with a large, slow gesture as if accustomed and indifferent to the niceties of attire. In his hand he held a volume of Maeterlinck containing studies of some recent experiments in psychic research, which he intended to peruse in the garden after breakfast.

Mr. Wombold seated himself at the table, laid the volume of Maeterlinck to one side, and lifted the newspapers, glancing idly at the head-lines. As he laid aside the last one, he noticed beneath it a small square of cardboard. It was of the shape, size, and texture of the ordinary business-card, and bore in its center a curious monogram composed of the letters H and F. Nothing else appeared on the card.

Mr. Wombold gazed at it, at first, with the same abstraction and indifference with which he had handled the newspapers; but the card, as if by some subtle and impelling attraction, held his gaze until it gradually focused into alert consciousness. The color left his face, which sank to the sickly yellow of old ivory.

A moment later, a stertorous intake of air, as if he was regaining his breath by a determined muscular effort, sent the blood surging back into his neck and face. He rose tremblingly, and violently pressed the button of an electric call-bell set in the wainscoting at his side. Otu answered the summons.

"Who has been in here?" Mr. Wombold demanded, glaring at the Japanese.

"None, sir."

"Where have you been?"

"I am attending the preparing fruit at the kitchen."

"Did you put those newspapers here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where did that come from?"

He pointed to the card, but did not touch it. Otu examined it, and shook his head.

"I not see it," he said. "I doan' know."

"Where is Miss Armitage?"

"She walk out some lil time. Back ver' soon, I guess."

Mr. Wombold turned from him with a growl that sent the Japanese scurrying out of the room. He took up the card very gingerly in the fingers of one hand and turned it over. The under side was blank. He carried the card to the buffet, where stood a bronze cigar-holder and ash-tray. He laid it on the tray and, lighting a match, held the burning wood to the cardboard till it was wholly consumed. Then he left the room for the lavatory, where he washed his hands. When he returned, Miss Armitage was in her place at the table.

"Has any one called here this morning?" Wombold asked, omitting any preliminary greeting.

"No one that I know of."

"I found a—a business-card by my plate. Do you know how it got there?"

Miss Armitage drew her pretty brows into a slight frown of perplexity.

"I am sure I couldn't tell you," she said. "I went out to mail the letters you dictated yesterday evening. There has been no one here that I know of."

Mr. Wombold stepped into the recess of the bay window and looked out over the rose-garden. The sun was warm; the flowers glistened with ardent life; a linnet in one of the rose-trees caroled shrilly. It was a most practical and reassuring scene.

As he came back to the table, Otu began serving breakfast. All the same, a preoccupation so profound settled over Mr. Wombold that he entirely neglected both the food and Miss Armitage's efforts at conversation. Presently he arose, and, leaving the volume of Maeterlinck behind, sauntered out into the garden.

II

Even the full tide of sunlight in which Mr. Wombold stood submerged failed to warm him, or to irradiate the dark flood of recollections that swept in upon him from a remote past. It had been forty years since he had seen that monogram. Time and success, wealth and long undisturbed security, had given to his sense of safety a complete finality. It had taken him some moments even to remember what the thing was.

Now, in miniature imposed by the perspective of the years, as if he looked through a reversed telescope, he saw again the quaint, winding streets of the old New England village, with their shading elms, their board sidewalks, their austere, peak-roofed dwellings. He saw the little shop, under its wooden awning, where two young men, playfellows and schoolmates, had bravely started their first business venture as partners. It seemed to him he could still smell, above the odor of the roses, the strange, mingled aromas of that dingy interior—spices from the tropics, salt fish that carried the tang of the ocean, the pungent smell of vinegar, the clean perfume of new linens and calicos.

It had been a store of general merchandise, and he had been one of its proud proprietors. His name had not been Wombold then. The firm's initials had been fashioned into a monogram, which had come to stand as its distinctive emblem—almost, one might say, its trade-mark. It appeared on its stationery, in its advertising, on the sign over the door. It was one of the many things of which the young partners had been so proud—"H" and "F" combined within a circle, thus:

Yes, forty years had passed since he had seen it.

But for all their pride and all their gay young confidence, the firm of Hart & Frazier had not prospered. It was hard to say what had been the matter, except that they were too eager, too confident, too daring. They had done much business, they had handled large sums, but they had also accumulated heavy debts. In the end, when failure became inevitable, they had agreed to turn all their assets into cash and pay their creditors *pro rata*, as much as possible. Then they would work together, as common laborers if need be, to settle the balance.

Part of this program, the liquidation of the assets, had been carried out. Then, one night, Frazier had disappeared, and with him had gone all of the firm's money. Hart was left to face utter ruin alone. How he had borne this betrayal, how he had met the disaster, how he had struggled to bear the burden, what life had held for him, whether indeed he had lived or died, the old man meditating in the garden did not know. The night through which he had fled, driven by the mad rebellion of all his youthful hopes against a premature defeat, had never lifted, for him, from that little New England town which it had engulfed.

Under another name, with the stolen money as his capital, and with the experience gained from failure, in the generous and fruitful West, fortune had come to him. By sheer force of will, later by habit, and at last in very truth, he had forgotten.

And now, like a strange blast of air blown out of some cavernous depth of time, had come this monogram. He shook his chilled frame, both to revive his lagging flow of blood and to dispel the sense of weird unreality that the experience of the morning had brought. His withered lips stiffened into a grim line as he thought of the most probable and practical explanation of the occurrence.

Blackmail, of course! Some one had identified him at last as Frazier, and had taken this clumsy method of rousing his fears. Later, no doubt, the full intrigue would be revealed.

Well, reflected the old man, they would have a merry time trying to bulldoze him! He had taken pains, before he fled from Bracksford, to ascertain that a partner who absconds with the firm's assets commits no crime. That was why Hart had been powerless to pursue him, because he had not had the machinery for the apprehension of criminals at his command. As for any civil liability, that was barred long ago by the statute of limitations. Legally, he was immune, and he could laugh at blackmailers.

He clung to this theory of blackmail. There was something human, material, normal, and understandable about it. Flesh and blood men did such things, and could be dealt with in the flesh. He was not too old to do battle with opponents who could be seen and felt and pointed out. They merely roused his courage and stimulated his dormant energies.

The other alternative he refused to consider, though it was that, he knew, which made the heat of the sun so oddly ineffectual. He had dabbled too much in the preternatural, and had cultivated too far a

"I FOUND A BUSINESS-CARD BY MY PLATE. DO YOU KNOW HOW IT GOT THERE?"

mystical attitude of mind, to be oblivious to the occult implications of the incident. Such ideas, he realized, grew on one imperceptibly.

He was sorry now that Miss Armitage had pointed his attention in the direction of spiritualism and psychic phenomena, though when the suggestion was made, in the period of ennui following his retirement from business, he had welcomed it rather gladly. He was sorry, too, that he had burned the mysterious card. It would have been better to preserve it, not only as a clue, but as a demonstration of normality. As it was, he had only memory and these dubious, fantastic conceptions that fascinated and appalled him. He wondered whether Hart was dead.

III

It was several days later that Mr. Wombold, returning from an afternoon motor ride, found Miss Armitage at her desk in the library fingering a significant slip of cardboard.

"A man called to see you while you were out," said the secretary.

Mr. Wombold glanced at the card she held out, but made no move to take it. He received the announcement without any visible sign of emotion, merely seating himself heavily and for a moment staring in silence at the wall.

"What kind of a man was he?" he asked, when he had mastered the contraction in his throat.

"Why, he was not a large man—rather slightly built, perhaps about thirty-five. He had brown hair and eyes, but he was somewhat gray, and had a kind of worried look. He is hard to describe exactly—rather odd-looking."

"How was he odd?"

Wombold put the question harshly, in a tone that grated with sharp insistence. The puzzled frown on Miss Armitage's forehead deepened.

"Why, he was dressed rather queerly, for one thing, as if his clothes had been laid away for thirty years or more. I noticed he wore one of those old-fashioned stiff white shirts, and he had a queer flat collar and bow tie. His coat was long, and his trousers weren't creased, but ironed smooth all round, and he had a low-crowned derby hat and buttoned shoes. He was pervaded by a general air of antiquity, one might say."

Wombold was leaning forward with his fists knotted on the arms of his chair. His deep, brooding eyes burned upon the girl's face.

"I told him you were out for a ride," she went on, "and he asked if your carriage would be long. I said I thought you would be back in an hour, so he left this card—"

"Did he have a beard?" the old man interrupted chokingly, his face suddenly gone gray.

"Yes, a short brown beard. Why, Mr. Wombold?"

Mr. Wombold had fallen back into the depths of the chair, with one whispered syllable that the girl did not understand. His ashen cheeks stood out in high relief against the dark upholstery. Miss Armitage sprang to his side.

"Your heart? Mr. Wombold, did you say it was your heart? Oh, Mr. Wombold, are you ill?"

He opened his eyes and regarded her strickenly, with the dumb reproach of one who has received dreadful tidings. Presently the lifetime habit of combat reasserted itself, and courage and resolution dawned in his gaze.

"Better in a moment," he whispered. "Don't leave me. The card!"

Miss Armitage lifted it from the desk where she had dropped it, and held it out.

"Keep it!" he ordered. "I am not yet convinced. It may be a trick. I am going to know. Help me to the couch."

After two days of troubled cogitation, during which he had steadied his nerves by the exercise of that steadfast will which served him in lieu of physical strength, Mr. Wombold fixed upon two methods of investigation, the one material, the other psychic. One or the other of them, he felt, should disclose the nature of the forces that menaced him.

To carry out the first, he employed a well-known detective agency, instructing the superintendent to ascertain the origin of the last card received, and the identity of the person who had presented it. He waited for a report before resorting to the second line of inquiry.

The report, when it came, proved baffling. As far as the mysterious caller who had appeared before Miss Armitage was concerned, absolutely no trace of him could be discovered. No individual answering his description had been seen in

the neighborhood of the Wombold residence, nor could any such person be found at any of the city's hotels or principal lodging-houses. The oddity of his aspect made this complete disappearance the more inexplicable.

As to the card, the report was less definite. The monogram, it seemed, was not so unique as Wombold had supposed. Two or three firms in the city having the initials "H" and "F" had used it, or something resembling it, and various job-printing houses had supplied stationery containing it. None, however, recalled printing cards bearing nothing else, and several printers were positive that the cardboard was of a stock which had not been in use or on the market for a number of years.

In short, the search of the detectives had ended against a blank wall. With a sickening apprehension, Wombold turned to his alternative line of research.

"Make an appointment with Mme. Charleroi for to-morrow afternoon," he told Miss Armitage.

The séance was held in Mr. Wombold's library, none being present but himself and the medium. The shades were drawn to half length, filling the room with a mellow, golden gloom.

Mme. Charleroi, a small, stout woman, garbed in black, and with the flat features, high cheek-bones, and neutral complexion of the Baltic littoral, was a noted psychic, enjoying an exclusive clientèle among the well-to-do and far removed from the common class of irresponsible charlatans. The aged magnate had consulted her often in recent years, not infrequently with remarkable results.

The two confronted each other now in an accustomed comradeship, the medium impassive, Wombold under a severely repressed strain that showed in his intent eyes and the slight, nervous movements of his lips and hands.

"Tell me what comes to you," he said. "Allow a free inflow of suggestion from across the border."

Mme. Charleroi leaned back and closed her eyes. She was motionless for ten or fifteen minutes, during which a slightly increased paleness and regular breathing denoted the heightening of psychic susceptibility. Wombold's gaze never left her face as he waited tensely the result of the experiment. At last the medium's lips moved, and as he leaned forward he could catch a faint form of words:

"I see—darkness!"

There was another pause, and then Wombold commanded sternly:

"Yes. Go forward! Try to pierce the darkness!"

An expression of pity and pain gradually came upon Mme. Charleroi's sleeping countenance.

"A wrong, very great and very old," she whispered. "There is some one to communicate with you—a troubled spirit. He speaks the name of Henry Hart."

The listener gasped.

"Go on!" he stammered.

Suddenly the quality of Mme. Charleroi's voice changed. It assumed a masculine ring, genial and cheery, yet with a note of reproach in it.

"George, you remember that mortgage I put on my house to meet the Macey Woolen Company's bill, don't you? George, they're going to foreclose that mortgage. I can't meet everything, and if I lose my home there'll be nothing for my family but beggary. I'm trying to see you—"

"Henry, have mercy!"

Wombold's stifled cry broke the thread of the medium's monologue. Mme. Charleroi's body was wrenched violently to one side, and she opened her eyes.

"What's the matter?" she demanded. "You hurt me!"

Wombold sat staring at her in a paroxysm of fear.

"Did anything happen?" repeated the medium.

He made no answer, but continued to stare as if her presence was blotted out for him by his own fearful fancies. Mme. Charleroi rose and rang the bell. Miss Armitage answered it.

"You'd better look after him," the medium said to her. "He's had a shock."

IV

It was three days before Wombold left his bed, and when he reappeared it was as if five or six years had elapsed, so much older and more broken did he appear. He seemed to have become a haunted man. Never for a moment would he consent to be left alone. If Miss Armitage could not be with him, Otu must be. At night the Japanese servant slept in his employer's bedroom, where he maintained at least a nominal watch.

Mr. Wombold had now definitely surrendered the idea of any human agency as responsible for the phenomena he had experienced. His preoccupation with spiritualism deepened, and his studies became more absorbing, though he no longer resorted to Mme. Charleroi or even permitted her to be mentioned. He still employed the detective agency, however, directing it to make discreet inquiry as to Henry Hart's relatives and their history. He learned in this way that Hart's widow still lived in Bracksford, and that the family had finally, after years of hardship, settled the last of the claims against the old partnership, though not until anxiety and stress had cost the life of Hart himself while still in his early manhood.

But though convinced of the supernatural character of the manifestations that had terrified him, and at heart skeptical of the precautions he had devised against their repetition, and though the power of reparation was his and the duty acknowledged by his own conscience, Wombold did nothing more toward satisfying his ancient debt. He seemed to await some further direction, some additional constraint, which should make restitution inescapable. It came soon enough, and in a manner entirely adequate.

Since the sitting with Mme. Charleroi, Wombold's sleep had been fitful and dream-laden—owing in part, perhaps, to the freer and more nutritious diet solicitously urged on him by Miss Armitage, coupled with a lack of his usual exercise. In his somnolent brain visions of a far-off boyhood mingled with broken images of present surroundings, as if two distinct personalities, each with its own distinct memory, struggled for dominance. He would wake suddenly from these confused fantasies into a painfully vivid consciousness in which every sense was strung to abnormal expectancy. Only by the severest self-discipline could he quiet himself again to slumber.

He woke thus one night, about the spectral hour of two in the morning, with the distressing intuition of an alien presence in the room. He listened, but could hear nothing more than his own panting breath.

By the dim glow of the night-lamp he could make out the recumbent figure of Otu on a cot at the other side of the room. The sight of the Japanese, and of the vague shapes of familiar articles in the room, reassured him. He could neither see nor hear anything to justify his alarm, and presently, with practised self-control, he recomposed himself to sleep.

Some time later his dreams, which had flowed through his mind in the usual incongruous jumble of sense images, resolved themselves into the definite impression of burial. He seemed to lie entombed, a mass of earth or stone pressing down upon him with an intolerable yet hopeless weight.

As his consciousness rose to the waking plane, this impression took on the poignant reality that constitutes a nightmare. He strove to cry out, to move, to escape. He groped wildly with his hands, which encountered a heavy object lying on his breast.

In an access of terror, he sprang to a sitting posture with a shriek. The thing slipped to his lap and lay there, massive, hard, ponderous. His hands explored its angular outline as he screamed again. In an instant Otu was by his side and had switched on the electric lights.

Fairly awake, but trembling with fright, Wombold hastily examined the object that lay in his lap. It was a large business ledger, musty, worn, and stained with time. Stamped upon its mildewed cover was the infernal monogram.

In a trance of fear, Wombold opened its yellowed leaves. His own handwriting stared up at him out of the ghostly past, over a guilt-haunted hiatus of forty years. With a thick sigh, the old man fell back upon his pillow in a dead faint.

Almost as frightened as his master, Otu ran into the hallway crying out for help. He was met almost instantly by Miss Armitage, who pressed by him into the room.

"Get the housekeeper! Get some hot water!" she ordered as she saw Wombold's white face against the pillows.

Otu ran to obey. In a few moments he returned with Mrs. Crane, the housekeeper, followed by one of the maids with a pitcher of hot water.

Miss Armitage's vigorous measures were already restoring a semblance of animation to the master's bloodless visage. His hands stirred feebly, and presently he opened his eyes. Mrs. Crane, who had mixed a stiff dose of whisky and hot water, brought it to the bedside, and Wombold revived under the potion; but with restored consciousness his nervous terror also began to return. He caught Miss Armitage's hand.

"Where is it?" he begged. "Where is the book?"

The girl shook her head.

"Don't think of it now," she said. "Don't think of anything till morning."

"But I must think of it!" he cried. "What was it? Where has it gone? Was it the ghost of a book? Didn't you see it?" He turned to Otu.

IN AN INSTANT OTU WAS BY HIS SIDE

"Sure, I see," agreed the Japanese.

But by this time Wombold was babbling feverishly, paying little attention to those about him.

"Do things like that have their astral counterparts? I saw it. I felt it in my hands. Am I to be drawn back into past time where all these dead and gone things are assembled? Shall I see him there? Oh, Henry, have a little pity on me! I'll send it, Henry. I'll pay it back—every cent, with interest. Now! Now! Get Carrington! Get him on the telephone! I must send it to-night. Oh, let me alone!"

He shook off the restraining hands of the women, and would have left his bed for the telephone below stairs, if, to quiet him, they had not promised to call his lawyer.

After some difficulty Miss Armitage succeeded in arousing Mr. Carrington, and induced him to come to the Wombold residence at once. By morning a draft for thirty-five thousand dollars, the amount of the original defalcation with interest added, was on its way to the little New England town, enclosed in a registered letter addressed to Henry Hart's widow.

V

In the sunny library Miss Clara Armitage was engaged in clearing out the drawers of her typewriter-desk. She was softly humming a gay little tune, bright as the sunlight itself, and on her face was a queer little smile, half-amused, half-wistful, such as that with which sympathetic grown-ups regard the tragedies of childhood.

From the deepest recess of the bottom

drawer she drew out a small package of cards, of the size and general character of business-cards, but having nothing printed on them except a circle enclosing a monogram composed of the letters "H" and "F." She ran these thoughtfully through her fingers for a moment, then slipped them into her pocket, went out into the hall, and mounted the stairs. On the floor above she knocked at Mr. Wombold's bedroom door. There being no audible reply, she entered.

Mr. Wombold lay in an easy chair before the window. He looked

IN AN ACCESS OF TERROR, HE SPRANG TO A SITTING POSTURE WITH A SHRIEK. THE THING SLIPPED TO HIS LAP AND LAY THERE, MASSIVE, HARD, PONDEROUS

as if he were just emerging from a grave illness. His skin had exchanged its wonted healthy pallor for a tissuelike fragility, his great eyes seemed unusually sunken in his emaciated features, and he was wrapped in a listless apathy such as belongs to the period of early convalescence.

Miss Armitage came forward and took a seat by his side. He regarded her vacantly, without change of expression.

"Mr. Wombold," she said, "I am going away. I have come to say good-by."

"Good-by?"

"Yes. I am going back to my home in Connecticut."

"What for?"

"I—I am going to be married," Miss Armitage confessed with a blush.

The old man sighed.

"It goes on," he said, "just the same, doesn't it? Life, that is—it goes on and on till the end."

"Mr. Wombold," cried the girl, "I can't bring myself to go away and leave you in this condition, a prey to all these superstitious fears. You have been very good to me, and I want to talk to you a little. Won't you listen?"

He acquiesced with a listless dropping of the eyelids.

"Do you remember six years ago," she went on, "when I applied at your bank for work? I had just come from the East. I had come on purpose to find you, Mr. Wombold."

Wombold glanced at her with a vague interest.

"Find me?" he repeated.

"Yes. When you gave me a place, I tried from the first to make myself so efficient that you would make me your private stenographer. When you did that, I worked harder than ever, hoping to make myself so indispensable that you would always keep me with you. I succeeded in that, as you know. By the time you retired from business, three years ago, I had my plans all laid. I knew from little things I'd seen, like not starting anything on Friday, and avoiding the number thirteen, and so on, that you were superstitious. So I got you into the way of studying occultism and spiritualism. I was so sure of my plans that I even had these cards printed then."

She held up the package of cards. Wombold's color had come back, and his eyes took on some of their old-time brilliance as he stared wonderingly at her.

"You had them printed—those cards? What for?"

"For my plan. But, tell me first, even if nothing mysterious had happened to induce you to pay back the money, wouldn't you still be glad you did it?"

"Yes," he said strongly. "It should have been done long ago. I have wished to do it, but I was held back by my pride, by the shame of confession—"

"I know," she hastily interrupted. "I thought that was it. And now I want you to know that it was I who placed one of these cards by your breakfast-plate last April. The story of the man who called to see you and left one of them was just a fabrication on my part. There wasn't any such man."

"But Mme. Charleroi?" he objected, in dazed amazement.

"She gets her percentage of the thirty-five thousand, never fear. It may be betraying her to tell you so, but I think you ought to know. As for that old ledger, I had it sent to me from home. It was I who came in and put it on your chest that night."

"You!" he cried. "In mercy's name, who are you?"

Her merry laugh had nevertheless a trace of tears in it as she caught his hand and answered:

"My dear old friend, I am the granddaughter of Henry Hart!"

NIGHTMARES

Imps of the brain who, like a pest,
Creep through the night and murder rest—
Dream-criminals who seem to be
Successful in their infamy,
Until from each abhorrent shape
In frantic struggles we escape,
With moans of fear or smothered cries,
Awaking from our fantasies.

Hamilton Williams

A Vindication of the Bourgeoisie

"DOWN WITH THE MIDDLE CLASS!" SHOUTS THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONIST, IMITATING HIS PROTOTYPE IN FRANCE—IS THE CRY BASED ON ANY GROUND OF JUSTICE OR REASON?

By Richard Le Gallienne

WHEN we say that history repeats itself, we merely put into a picturesque phrase our observation of the fact that, given conditions and causes similar to those which resulted in certain happenings in the past, they are likely to produce similar happenings in the present. We are apt to regard this process as automatic. We do not sufficiently realize an important factor in bringing about this result of repeated history—namely, that history largely repeats itself by consciously imitating itself.

History repeats itself no little because history imitates itself. No one can read history without observing that the characters of the makers of it include no small proportion of the histrionic gift. More or less consciously, they live up to Shakespeare's conception of the world as a stage—a stage on which they are prominent players. So soon as the particular drama in which they find themselves cast as actors, or in which they assume parts, begins to take on a resemblance to some famous historic drama of the past, this histrionic sense of theirs prompts them to make the resemblance still closer, and to conform their own parts more nearly to certain picturesque predecessors—Brutus, or Camille Desmoulins, or Garibaldi, or Lincoln, or whatever particular hero of the past best matches with the moment and their own personalities.

Thus they introduce into the situation features really false to it, and impose upon it a certain anachronistic development. For actually, conditions and causes, however much they may resemble those that have existed before, are not, and cannot be, the same. When looked into closely, they must inevitably reveal differences of such importance as materially to change their import and to necessitate differences in their handling.

The dangers of imitative history-making are obvious. The natural development of events in the past has not seldom been turned awry by the imaginative interference of some actor posing in one century as if he was a historic figure of another age. But probably at no period has the danger been so great as at the present time, and for two reasons.

One is the fact of the world being dangerously saturated with literature, literature too often the product of cheap anarchistic thinking and the expression of blatant egotistic "personalities." The other is the magnifying medium of cheap publicity in which we all live and move and have our being. Just now every efficient mediocrity is exaggerated into a genius, or a superman; any one who does his plain duty is described as a hero; brave lads returning from the front with slight wounds are made ridiculous as "veterans"; and politicians manifestly unequal to the tremendous moment are endued with the robes of dead giants, in which they look pitifully diminutive.

When a handsome young poet dies of fever in Greece, on his way to the war, we are not content with paying him his proper honors, but we must make him absurd by a facile sentimental comparison with Byron—who was not merely a great poet, but whose presence in Greece had come about from a noble personal initiative, whose voice had roused Europe to a consciousness of her wrongs, and who used most of his

fortune in the struggle of which, more than any individual Greek, he was the animating soul.

These remarks are not attempts to mimimize one's contemporaries. They are merely meant to illustrate on a small scale the habit of dramatic exaggeration which prevails throughout the whole modern world, and the vice of histrionic pose which infects it. We are content with nothing life-size, but must see everything and everybody in heroic proportions, and describe them in terms of historic mythology.

THE TRAGEDY OF RUSSIA

Now the portentous event which on the largest possible scale points the moral of these reflections is, of course, the revolution in Russia. Here was a great organic movement toward freedom, prepared by generations of oppression, planned and directed in its earlier stages by men and women of truly heroic courage and self-sacrifice—revolutionists who were no mere makers of imitation history, but who handled the conditions before them with an audacious originality, a dazzling scorn of danger, a contempt for death, which has given the word "nihilist" a quality at once sinister and sacred. Heroes and martyrs indeed were those men and women who in unrecorded thousands, year after year, faced the terrors of Siberia that Russia might at last be free.

They it was who with infinite patience laid the mine which at last exploded with such earth-shaking consequences. While in their hands, it was a genuine Russian revolution; but scarcely had they seen the fruit of their long years' travail when they found themselves roughly shouldered aside. The control of the great, surging movement—which needed above all things new wisdom for its guidance, delicately understanding brains as well as strong and pure moral force—passed into the hands of alien mountebanks utterly devoid of constructive ability. These blind leaders had nothing to bring to an essentially new situation—new because of the differences between the two peoples, and because of its greater magnitude—than the mouthing formulas of the French Revolution.

When in doubt, play the "Marseillaise" or place a batch of bourgeoisie before a firing-squad—such was the sum total of statesmanship possessed by those preposterous criminal *farceurs,* Trotzky and Lenine. Charlatan makers of imitation history, they have, for the present, turned an authentic Russian revolution into an imitation French Revolution, reenacting the old stern tragedy in the spirit of a bloody farce. It is plain to see that apart from their practical activities as tools of Germany, they have in their own egotistical imaginations been posing as dictators of the Revolutionary Tribunal of 1793.

To the admiration of at least one of their American admirers, they are said to affect a sansculottism of dress and appearance, haranguing meetings in the shabbiest clothes and ostentatiously unshaven. They take a childish pleasure in issuing harsh, blood-curdling decrees, in the name of the Committee of Public Safety—a phrase which they adopt as a part of their imitative melodrama, and roll on their tongues with the unction of a stage villain. It is a pity that they cannot introduce the cry "*À la lanterne!*" or revive the dancing of the carmagnole; but they do their best in other directions. The machine gun proves an excellent substitute, in their hands, for the guillotine, and they have already outdone the September massacres of 1792 by systematic murders of large batches of officers and bourgeoisie.

They also paralleled the French Revolution by the murder of the Czar. This was a wholly unnecessary crime, but it was easily seen to be inevitable by any one who had divined the histrionic conditions and dramaturgic gifts of these film-actors of the new Terror. The new Marat and the new Couthon must have in the cast of their play a new Louis XVI, whom they will ostentatiously speak of as Nicholas Romanoff, just as the executioners of the Revolutionary Tribunal addressed Louis as "the man, Louis Capet." Harmless and timid gentleman though he was, his continued existence must be represented as a serious danger to the "sovereign people"; but the real reason for his murder is that the artists, Trotzky and Lenine must have the drama in which they are starring artistically complete. So is history made forcibly to repeat itself.

EMPTY CATCHWORDS OF REVOLUTION

All the catchwords of the French Revolution, of course, have been religiously trumpeted forth, irrespective of their proven fallacies, or of their unfitness to the Russian situation. The Russian situation was forced into them as onto a Procrustean bed. The

eternal "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité,*" was flaunted as the indispensable banner, and the real villain of the piece was not so much the Czar as the hated bourgeoisie. *À bas la bourgeoisie!* Down with the hated bourgeoisie! Up with the gentle and charming Bolsheviki!

Now, as regards these battle-cries of the French Revolution, Messrs. Trotzky and Lenine have been no more blameworthy or singular than their revolutionary brethren all over the world. Those battle-cries are a part of the inflammatory insignia of the extremists of the labor movement among all nations. They are, of course, constantly on the roaring lips of our own Bolsheviki, the I. W. W., as also on the tongues of certain of our fiery young professors and parlor socialists.

The only advantage the Russian dictators possessed in their use of them over these as yet embryonic tyrants is that they had a larger and more fertile field in which to sow their dragons' teeth of anarchy. They had a nation which at present is practically all mob to try them on—and the results we know. They are not such as to encourage other nations in making literal copies of the French Revolution.

Of course, the French Revolution is not meant to be copied, but to be learned from, and it may well be that it was mistaken alike about *égalité* and about the bourgeoisie. We may briefly inquire into that presently, but meanwhile it may surely be granted that no progress is made for the freedom of mankind by a merely superstitious application of resounding antique formulas, however illustrious, and however valuable in their day, to the problems of a later time and another country.

It is admitted that in spite of its atrocities of method, and the half-true or one-tenth-true social conceptions which inspired its leaders, the French Revolution achieved a certain measure of success for progressive idealism; but at least as much had already been achieved by the American War of Independence, and the sure-footed political sense of England, assisted somewhat by those English political philosophers from whom the French revolutionary philosophers stole most of their thunder, was already on the way to a more stable achievement without the aid of guillotine or *noyades*.

It is dangerously fallacious to regard the French Revolution as much more than a local outbreak of a wide-spread revolutionary spirit, which in France, in conformity to the French temperamental character, and under the pressure of peculiarly French conditions, took its violently dramatic form —the "red fool-fury of the Seine," to use Tennyson's bitter phrase.

ENGLISH REFORM, FRENCH REVOLUTION

England generated the ideas of the French Revolution, but her national character saved her from applying them in their crude state. All the valuable leaders of English reform seem to have instinctively realized that it was to the best interests of the entire commonwealth to administer only small doses of revolutionary theory at a time to the class which—perhaps unjustly submerged, and certainly in process of evolution—was unaccustomed to ideas and unable to realize the need of wisdom in their application.

In France, however, with its passion for abstract ideas, such men as Diderot and the Encyclopedists in general elevated the cruelly oppressed and brutalized peasant, and the depraved and criminal loafers of the Paris slums, into an ideal impossibility called the "natural man." Only let this natural man have free scope, as against the "mere handful of knaves"—sovereigns, nobles, bourgeoisie, and so forth, who had immemorially oppressed him—and the millennium would be immediately forthcoming. Wiser French heads saw the danger of such crude intellectual alcohol on the empty stomachs of the French proletariat.

"Philosophize between yourselves as much as you please," said Voltaire to his friends, the Encyclopedists, and to the nobles who flirted with the fashionable doctrines of Rousseau—many of whom, as we know, were genuinely anxious for reform, and had indeed made sacrifices toward bringing it about. "I fancy," he continued, "I hear dilettanti giving for their own pleasure a refined music; but take good care not to perform this concert before the ignorant, the brutal, the vulgar. They might break your instruments over your heads!"

And again, with prophetic foresight, he said:

"Atheism and fanaticism are two monsters which may tear society to pieces."

It was, of course, the sparks of such abstract catchwords dropped by the philosophers upon the accumulated gunpowder of popular discontent and despair—discontent

and despair atrociously justified, as no one denies—that resulted in the Terror. All through the reign of Louis XV, publicists had been expecting a revolution. In 1743 the Marquis d'Argenson had written:

Revolution is certain in the state.

Time and again the Paris mob had yelled for "death to the king and the bishops." But a few foolish idealistic phrases were still needed to inspire the oppressed, not merely with a sense of their wrongs, on which they had brooded for a century, but with a mad, impossible dream. There was to be no more mending of old institutions. The whole laboriously evolved organism of society was to be shattered to bits, and remolded nearer to the mob's desire.

THE PERMANENCE OF HUMAN NATURE

It was dazzling. It seemed easy. So far as the superficial destruction of the *ancien régime* went, it proved easy. Almost anything can be done with sufficient brutality and enough guns. But the blood-stained dreamers had left out the one factor which dreamers always leave out—human nature. Nor had they yet heard of that law of evolution which was still to give stability to as much of the *ancien régime* as was not hopelessly decayed and of no further use in the world.

The throne had gone, the nobility had been decimated, the church had once more been martyred, and the object of their latest and perhaps bitterest fury, the bourgeoisie, had been terrorized by the guillotine and by the drownings—*noyades*—of that foulest of human monsters, Carrier, of Nantes. Everything had been done that medieval torturers could have suggested in the interests of that dream-monster, the natural man, yet kings were to rule again in France, the sacraments are still administered there by a beloved priesthood, France is still the country of gentlemen, and the bourgeoisie shares with its peasantry the honor and the burden of being its marvelous backbone. Priests, gentlemen, and bourgeoisie, as well as peasantry, have survived because they are no arbitrary creations of philosophers, but naturally evolved "estates" of human beings living together in a social interdependence.

There is no class of society that has not in its turn been regarded by the people as its oppressor, and doubtless there has always been some real justification for most of the manifestations of popular disapproval which have from time to time purged or disciplined the offending classes. In England, in the reign of Henry VI, when Jack Cade led his motley multitude of the "commons of Kent" against London, and succeeded so well as to occupy and overawe it for some days, it was the lawyers of the Temple who were indicted as the oppressors of freedom. Doubtless the legal profession has its sins to answer for, and yet it is hard to see how a complex society, regulated by a multiplicity of laws, can entirely dispense with lawyers—though it is, of course, proper and necessary that they, as a class, should be subject to social supervision.

Again, there has always been, and still is, a strong popular prejudice against those useful members of society who lend out their money at interest. At the present time the Turks attempt to justify their treatment of the Armenians by stigmatizing them as usurers. They lend money to the Turkish peasants, it is said, at excessive rates of interest, and so get them into their power. This, if true, is an abuse to be remedied, but the ruthless extinction of the Armenian race is hardly necessary for its correction; nor is it to be inferred that lending money at a reasonable interest is thus proved to be an illegitimate branch of human business.

In the Middle Ages, as we know, all lending of money, at however low a rate, was regarded us usury, and, on the basis of a text in Scripture, was severely forbidden by the church. According to Lecky, who has an interesting chapter on the subject, "usury has been condemned by twenty-eight councils and by seventeen Popes." Curiously enough, if a man lent you his money for nothing, and you returned it to him intact—you, meanwhile, having had the profitable use of it, of which he had meanwhile been deprived—this was looked upon as a perfectly fair transaction; but, should he charge you so little as one per cent, he faced serious consequences from the church.

According to Lecky, it was the growth of commerce, with its financial necessities, and the practical common sense which business always develops, that finally overpowered the opposition of the church, and thus inaugurated that system of credit by which the whole world to-day is bound together.

This old conflict, strange as it sounds, was one of the basic causes of the Refor-

mation, one of whose greatest leaders, John Calvin, expressed himself with admirable good sense on the subject. "Usury," he maintained, "was only wrong when it was exacted in an oppressive manner from the poor"; and nowadays I suppose we will agree that that is about the conclusion of the whole matter.

"À BAS LA BOURGEOISIE!"

Now, as it has been with kings, nobles, priests, lawyers, usurers, it has been, since they first came into existence, with the bourgeoisie. Indeed, the unlucky bourgeoisie has often been made the popular scapegoat for all the other offending estates, and has been regarded as concentrating the vices of all. This, indeed, remains the point of view of the advanced revolutionary party at the present time. Its program may be said to begin and end with "*À bas la bourgeoisie!*"

The reason, or unreason, for this—in the past, at all events—is not difficult to see. To begin with, the bourgeoisie, as it first evolved, was but the proletariat risen in the world, the enterprising serf or peasant who, by superior industry and skill, or by force of character, had been able to purchase certain privileges from his feudal or ecclesiastical overlord, and who, by combining with others of a like social value, had been able to start partially independent commercial villages and towns — burghs. Those less enterprising relatives of his whom he thus left behind, or later on was able to assist by employment—taking them from the hard labor of the fields to initiate them into crafts and trades—have never forgiven him. The hatred of the proletariat for the bourgeoisie is, to start with, a family jealousy; and there is no member of the proletariat who, if he told the truth, is not aspiring to the condition of a bourgeois.

It was this unlucky "third estate" which, not all unwillingly, one must admit, was the agency through which the oppressions of the higher classes were carried out. This is particularly true of France, and it accounts in a large degree for that revolutionary hatred of the bourgeoisie which has become one of the sacred canons of modern revolutionary doctrine. The king and his ministers levied the terrible taxes, the *taille* and the *corvée*, and so forth, but it was a bourgeois farmer-general and his various bourgeois underlings who terribly collected them.

Desperately poor and ignorant people oppressed by unjust laws are too far away from the fountainhead of the injustice to concern themselves with that abstract oppressor. All they see is the agent of the injustice, who almost certainly is as helpless as themselves. On him will fall the odium of enforcing those unjust laws; and sometimes, when the poor victim gives way to the hysteria of despair, he will be torn to pieces, or split in two with the ax with which the peasant cuts up his rocklike loaf of acorn bread, or a gun from behind a hedge will pick him off as he rides home. The king is dallying with his mistresses at Versailles, the farmer-general is growing rich and climbing as near as he can to the court circle, and the various degrees of parasitic middlemen between him and the unfortunate collector of the *taille* are battening in their ratio; but he who was least guilty of all lies with cloven head, or with a bullet through his heart.

That the French peasant of the eighteenth century, hunger-mad and unspeakably crushed and brutalized as he was, should have become possessed with a wolfish hatred for any one who was better fed or better clothed than himself, is merely natural. His cup of bitterness had brimmed too full for him to be a respecter of persons, to discriminate between estates and degrees, even if his rudimentary intellect had been capable of so much thought. All he knew was labor, suffering, and foul injustice, and these at last set moving his one intellectual process—hate.

THE POLITICIANS OF THE TERROR

Of course, it was no committee of acorn-eating peasants that made the Terror. The watchword of "*À bas la bourgeoisie!*" was to a great degree the deliberately selected slogan of a small political group who, as not unusual with reformers, combined a fanatic patriotism with a ruthless determination to dictate the government. Clever men were these, cynically using the sansculottes and the viragoes of the Halles as their tools.

It is seldom called to mind that those who were responsible for the "red fool-fury of the Seine" had none of the excuses of the tyranny-maddened proletariat they employed, but themselves belonged to the very classes they sent to the guillotine. Of the twelve men who composed the Committee of Public Safety, all are described as well-

educated, nine of them belonged to the bourgeoisie, and three of them to the nobility. On the lips of the masses of France the cry of "*À bas la bourgeoisie!*" can be understood as a sincere, if mistaken, imprecation; but on the lips of the twelve members of the Committee of Public Safety it was nothing more than a political catchword—just as it is once more to-day.

As intelligent men, they knew that of the three estates the bourgeoisie was least to blame for the evils of France. They knew that the blame for those evils, as for all such long-accumulated conditions, was far from belonging wholly to the reigning king and his court, or to any other of the privileged classes, but that it went back at least as far as Louis XIV, and should perhaps have lain heaviest on Louis XV. Yet if, taking things as they were at the moment, any class was to be arraigned, it was emphatically that of the king and his court. It had been royal extravagance and misgovernment that had bankrupted the nation.

The bourgeoisie inevitably shared in the corruption of the body politic, of which it was an organic part; yet the corruption had had its origin before the bourgeoisie began to exist. Moreover, it was to be the bourgeoisie which, for all the fanatic denunciation of it, was in the end to save France—as it had done most to make it.

The blame must always be placed somewhere; and, royalty having been guillotined, the nobles having become *émigrés,* the French Revolution, represented largely by the Rue St. Antoine, placed it, with an emphasis that still dangerously remains and is constantly being reemphasized, upon the bourgeoisie. This was unjust, but in the whirlpool of such a struggle even the right can scarcely escape doing wrong. A just principle fighting for its life against heavy odds will necessarily hit out right and left, and will sometimes confuse friends with foes. For men in the heat of conflict there is every excuse, though they break the wrong head; and France has been held excused for the tragic mistakes of the Terror, because of the abominable wrongs that maddened it and the high purpose that moved starlike behind the bloody clouds.

THE BATTLE-CRIES OF FRANCE

Unfortunately for us who have come after, along with her genius for action, France has associated a genius for speech, for verbal expression, in which ancient Greece is her only parallel. Anything she cries out in the high moments of her history becomes, as it were, engraved upon marble. It is no sooner uttered than it seems calm and classical with immortal sanction. Therefrom comes our danger to-day in incorporating into our even more vexed and complex politics those dramatic rallying-cries to which the imagination too readily answers, but which reason is compelled to reconsider.

"*Liberté, égalité, fraternité!*" Who can escape the thrill of that battle-cry? And whose feet are they that do not step out, however world-weary, to the song of the men of Marseilles? Yes, we are ready, when that music takes us by the arm, even to shout:

"*À bas la bourgeoisie!*"

Such is the intensity of the French soul, and such the carrying power of the French language across time.

Yet if the modern world must choose a French battle-cry, it were better and more reasonable that it should choose the old call of the French knights:

"*À St. Denis! À St. Denis!*"

As a matter of fact, that battle-cry, properly understood, would rally to its crusade all those finer instincts of mankind for which the word "chivalric" is still in use—a word which, alas, still outclasses the word "democratic." But, natural as it is to be led astray by illustrious ancient battle-cries, and proper though it be that we should take from them what measure of inspiration they can give, it is far more necessary that we should take care not to allow them a superstitious influence over our judgment.

Above all, we must not employ them, without qualification and interpretation, in the similar but yet different work of the modern world. There is no possible excuse for any reformer to raise the old cry of "*À bas la bourgeoisie!*" under modern conditions. Any one who should raise it in a public square should be arrested just as surely as any one who should raise the red flag of anarchy on land, or the black flag of piracy on the sea.

To say the least, it is an anachronism; but, keeping in mind all its implications and its dynamic power over uninstructed minds, its inflammatory use at the present time is a crime against the social order. The true business, the only *raison d'être,* of social reformers, of propagandists of a better world, is not lazily to adopt and advertise the

maxims of men who have done their work and are taking their rest—men who manfully dealt with the times in which they lived, and with which they had to wrestle—but to invent ways and means and watchwords adapted to the problems and conditions with which we are face to face. Reminiscent rhetoric is the last thing we are in need of to-day; and the revolutionary mistakes of the past are no safe basis for the revolutionary platform of the present.

The true revolutionist of our time, far from crying "*À bas la bourgeoisie!*" would expound the error in which that old cry originated. While seeing clearly the shortcomings of the bourgeois class, he would show by incontrovertible historical evidence how and why, for what good and useful reasons, it came into being, and still continues. Furthermore, he would explain how it would be practically impossible for the civilized world to go on without it.

WHAT WE OWE TO THE BOURGEOISIE

It is a point for these denouncers of the bourgeoisie to consider that, had no bourgeoisie existed, they themselves would not have existed to denounce it. All forms of learning, all arts and sciences, all crafts and trades, if they do not owe their very existence to the bourgeoisie, at least owe their preservation and dissemination to the intelligence and energy of that absurdly unappreciated class.

It should at least be demanded of those who have lived a century and more after a great formative social event that they should do more than repeat the formulas which brought it about; that, while they are inspired by its spirit, they should give some attention to its methods, and learn alike by its achievements and by its mistakes. Otherwise, history may as well be left to school-children, and remain, as formerly it was, a matter of kings and dukes and generals.

The proletariat to which, for the most part, the modern philosopher addresses himself, lives in towns—towns with comforts and conveniences, with opportunities of pleasure and enlightenment, which would never have existed had it not been for the strenuous and courageous initiative of the hated bourgeoisie. The proletariat would have remained, as its denomination implies, mere offspring of the teeming, overburdened earth, subject to every exaction of its brutal, unlettered feudal lord—a fierce lord of the castle who could not sign his name, except with that sign of the cross which to-day the humblest laborer blushes to put his hand to. They would have been hanged for hunting a rabbit, and tortured for concealing salt.

Instead, the bourgeoisie built towns for them to take refuge in, and wrested laws from their castellated oppressors by which at least the breath in their bodies was made comparatively safe. Also, in the burghs thus adventurously created and stubbornly defended, they were sure of something besides acorns in their stomachs. After a while, owing to these unappreciated achievements of their brothers, the bourgeoisie, they began to realize that they were no longer serfs of the lord of the manor, but men. They were freemen of a commune, of a burgh, of—if necessary—a fortified city, able to take care of itself against his lordship's men-at-arms; more than their equals, owing to bourgeoisie chemists and artificers, with steel and gunpowder and various other bourgeois devices.

There is, it would appear, an instinct in the blood of humanity to sneer at—or, at least, to hold in light esteem—the men who trade. Long before Napoleon described England as a nation of shopkeepers, Greece had set its legislative stigma against the men who defiled their hands with commerce. In Bœotia such were excluded from all offices of the state for ten years. To quote Lecky once more:

> Plato pronounced the trade of a shopkeeper to be a degradation to a freeman, and he wished it to be punished as a crime. Augustus condemned a senator to death because he had debased his rank by taking share in a manufacture.

Greek prejudice against trade was chiefly due to the fact that in the minds of the aristocrats it was associated with slaves; and, generally speaking, it may be admitted that trading is apt to develop human selfishness and to tend to materialization. The tradesman, being frequently merely a middleman, and not in contact with those processes of creation and manufacture which demand a greater variety of intelligence, is liable to become narrowed and hardened by having nothing to consider but the financial profits of his transactions. And it is against such men, who undoubtedly form too large a class of the community, that I conceive the prejudice against the bourgeoisie to be chiefly directed. In a sense, they toil not, neither

do they spin. They are not producers, but merely manipulators. In our complicated society they have their necessary place, but a simplification of society which would reduce their numbers would doubtless be to the benefit of society at large.

It is to be feared, however, that the term bourgeoisie, as employed to-day by the agitators of the proletariat, has no more special signification than what we call the "well-to-do." In other words, it includes practically all the classes above the status of the artizan who holds that labor is the sole cause of wealth, that the man who digs the ground or tends the machine is the only person to be considered, and that his class alone should have a voice in the government of society. As Taine has said, Rousseau has taught the world "not to value men, but to count them."

"The poor man alone," said Robespierre, "is virtuous, wise, and fitted to govern."

Against these pretensions it is easy enough to bring arguments, though hardly profitable. The fallacy of such a position may well seem obvious, and scarcely worth discussing. Yet, when such a dogma is elevated into the uncompromising principle and program of a party, the danger to the rest of the community is apparent, and, if persisted in, it can only lead to serious social dissensions. In the interests of all classes it is to be hoped that such dissensions, inevitable as they may appear, may be avoided; and the danger of them will certainly be lessened by the abandonment of watchwords which may contain a proportion of truth, but which, when dispassionately examined, are clearly seen to be misleading and unsuitable to the conditions of the moment.

THE NEED OF SANITY AND JUSTICE

To pronounce a wholesale condemnation against the bourgeoisie is as unintelligent as it is unjust. To recognize the faults of the bourgeoisie, and even to take drastic measures to remedy those faults, is one thing, but to say that the only remedy is a root and branch extinction of the offending class is quite another.

That it is the tendency of the bourgeoisie to elevate itself into a privileged class at the expense of the proletariat will not be denied, but this tendency can surely be corrected by patient legislation, and the proletariat is already sufficiently powerful to enforce such legislation. While the faults of the bourgeoisie are glaring, at the same time the debt of society at large to their initiative and solid achievements from the Middle Ages to the present time should be admitted. Indeed, in view of the frequently ignorant and often wilful misconceptions concerning it, it needs to be very seriously emphasized.

Such justice as we have in the world has been the hard-won achievement of the bourgeoisie—or, as it is more natural for Anglo-Saxons to term it, the middle class. Practically all arts and sciences, all the useful trades, all the principal intercourse between nations are due to its laborious efforts from generation to generation. All the great geographical discoveries have come out of its maritime enterprise. But for it, the world would not have advanced beyond primitive agriculture on the one hand and the predatory lawlessness of mere brute force on the other.

The tyranny of kings and nobles has been broken by its persistent, courageous, and tactful pressure. The creation of wealth which is largely due to its industry and skill, has been the chief factor in the development of human freedom. If, to revise Taine's phrase, we attempt a valuation of men, instead of merely counting them, it is only necessary to read history, and the biographies of the greatest and most useful figures of history, to realize beyond any possibility of denial that as a class the bourgeoisie has produced infinitely the largest percentage of the formative members of modern civilization.

There is no branch of human activity to which the bourgeoisie has not contributed its outstanding and most forceful personalities. Unless one is prepared to deny the value of the achievements of civilization—of those arts, inventions, and institutions which give significance to human life beyond mere elementary physical existence—it is impossible to see how humanity's immense obligations to the bourgeoisie can be disputed. Indeed, the proletariat itself, the more it develops and wins its proper rights, is seen to be merging into the bourgeoisie. What is the world at large to-day but a middle-class world?

Therefore, the sooner the reform movement drops the shibboleth of *"À bas la bourgeoisie!"* and endeavors to understand it instead, the more lasting and valuable will its reforms be, and the more secure the gains for human freedom.

The Great Revival of Outdoor Sport

WITH THE WORLD WAR ENDED, THE PRESENT YEAR HAS SEEN A REMARKABLE BOOM IN BASEBALL, RACING, GOLF, TENNIS, AND ATHLETICS OF ALL SORTS

By Joseph Vila

Sporting Editor of the New York Evening Sun

IN America, and, indeed, in all civilized countries, since the ending of the world war, there has been an unprecedented revival of almost every form of sport. In France and Great Britain, during the struggle with Germany, outdoor pastimes were practically forgotten. They were kept partially alive in far-off Australia, and in this country they maintained their existence until a year ago last July, when Uncle Sam's "work or fight" edict practically killed all interest in professional baseball, boxing, rowing, golf, tennis, and track athletics. Horse-racing survived the government's edict, and college football of an informal nature was played by some of the smaller institutions last autumn.

As soon as the armistice was signed, however, sports of all kinds began to regain their former vigorous life. The promoters of the big baseball leagues were the first to lay plans for the campaign of 1919. The club-owners, in order to revive popular interest, made numerous player deals, which, on the whole, have produced the desired results. Baseball, as a result, has enjoyed the most prosperous and profitable season in many years. The attendance records, particularly in New York, have exceeded the fondest hopes of the so-called "magnates." The legalizing of Sunday baseball in the Empire State has been welcomed by thousands of people who in former years were never able to enjoy games at the Polo Grounds.

CLIFFORD CRAVATH, MANAGER OF THE PHILADELPHIAS, AND ONE OF THE LEADING BATTERS OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE

The patronage at the Polo Grounds is significant of the present popularity of outdoor sport. The Giants, who were sold last winter for more than a million dollars, have drawn enormous crowds. More than half a million "fans" have seen the powerful ball club, led by Manager John J. McGraw, play in the historic Brush Stadium. As the paid admissions average eighty cents at the gates, the New York National League Club has handled receipts of about four hundred thousand dollars, of which one-

quarter has been distributed among the visiting clubs.

The Yankees, who represent New York in the American League, have also enjoyed unprecedented prosperity this year. Colonel Jacob Ruppert, the president of the club, has spent a fortune for star players, but his team has not compared favorably with the Giants from a playing standpoint. Colonel Ruppert and his partner, however, have made money for the first time since they paid four hundred thousand dollars for the franchise in January, 1916. The team, managed by Miller Huggins, has been a pennant factor ever since the beginning of the campaign last April.

Over in Brooklyn, where the club headed by Charles H. Ebbets was on the verge of bankruptcy two years ago, the restoration of the game to popular favor has yielded handsome profits, although the Brooklyn players have not been able to furnish their loyal followers with winning baseball. On the other hand, Boston, once a big money-maker, has had an unwonted experience, for the two famous teams of Braves and Red Sox have been disrupted and have trailed far behind the leaders. Philadelphia

BYRON BANCROFT JOHNSON, WHO, AS PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN LEAGUE, IS A DOMINANT MAGNATE IN THE BASEBALL WORLD

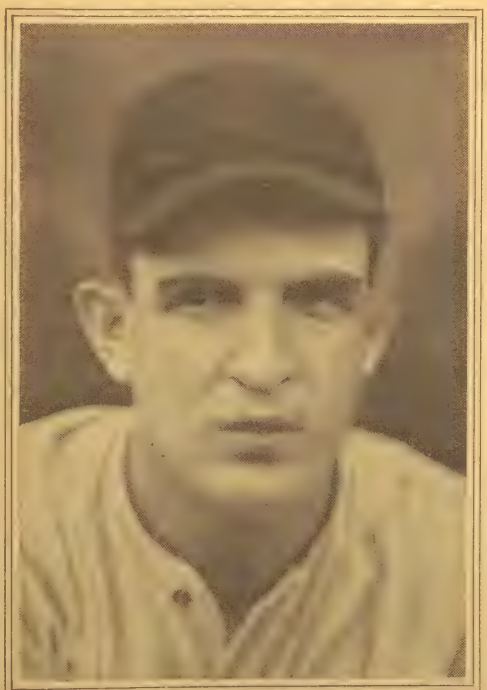
From a photograph by Harris & Ewing, Washington

BENNY KAUFF, ONE OF THE STRONG PLAYERS OF THE GIANTS, THE FAMOUS NEW YORK NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM

TY COBB, OF THE DETROIT TIGERS, THE MOST PROMINENT STAR OF THE AMERICAN LEAGUE

and Washington, represented by losing teams, have also displayed unusual indifference.

In the West the game has boomed ever since the start of the pennant races. The Western teams in both major circuits have shown surprising strength, the American League being particularly fortunate in this respect. The Chicago White Sox, the Detroit Tigers, the Cleveland Indians, and the St. Louis Browns have been active contenders for the championship. In fact, up to the 1st of August, these teams, together with the New York Americans, had practically equal chances to win a place in the World's Series. The American League, as a whole, has received greater patronage than the National League—which is probably due to the masterful leadership of its president, Byron Bancroft Johnson, easily the most influential man in the government of the sport.



JIM VAUGHN, THE STAR LEFT-HANDER OF THE CUBS, CHICAGO'S NATIONAL LEAGUE TEAM

The strongholds of the National League in the West have been Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Chicago. The Cincinnati Reds, capably managed by Patrick Moran, have fought a remarkable battle with the Giants for leading

PAT MORAN, THE SUCCESSFUL MANAGER OF THE CINCINNATI REDS

ROGERS HORNSBY, THE STAR PLAYER OF THE ST. LOUIS CARDINALS

JESS BARNES, A LEADING MEMBER OF THE NEW YORK GIANTS' PITCHING STAFF

ROSS YOUNG, THE BRILLIANT RIGHT-FIELDER OF THE NEW YORK GIANTS

honors. As a natural result, the Cincinnati club has banked a large sum of money in profits—to the delight of its stockholders, who have been compelled to pocket losses for many, many campaigns. The Pittsburgh Pirates, who made a million dollars for Barney Dreyfuss, owner of the quarters feeling thoroughly convinced that the great national game has been permanently restored to its old-time popularity.

SHINING STARS OF THE DIAMOND

The success of the baseball season has depended partly upon the brilliant work of

JOHN ARNOLD HEYDLER, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF BASEBALL CLUBS

club during the period from 1902 to 1910 inclusive, have renewed their prosperity this summer. The Chicago Cubs, who won the National League pennant a year ago, have been a disappointment, but their financial backers—Messrs. Wrigley, Armour, and others—have sustained no losses. The big-league clubs, therefore will go into winter the star players. Prominent among these skilled performers is Eddie Collins, for whose release Charles A. Comiskey, owner of the Chicago White Sox, paid fifty thousand dollars to Connie Mack, of Philadelphia. Joe Jackson, of the same team, has been one of the American League's best hitters. Eddie Cicotte, who is now thirty-

four years old, is the leading pitcher of the Johnson circuit, and has kept the White Sox in the running all season.

Another famous veteran, Tyrus Raymond Cobb, two years younger than Cicotte, has been a prominent factor in the success of the Detroit Tigers. Tris Speaker, a fifty-thousand-dollar star, became the manager of the Clevelands in July. "Babe" Ruth, the heaviest batsman in either major league, leads in home-runs, yet the Red Sox, of which he is a member, have not been winners. George Sisler, of the St. Louis Browns, and Roger Peckinpaugh, of the New York Yankees, are the best players on their respective teams.

TEX RICKARD, THE NAPOLEONIC PROMOTER OF BOXING WHO STAGED THE WILLARD-DEMPSEY MATCH

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York

The Giants have been contenders for the National League pennant all season because John McGraw put together a powerful baseball machine. Ross Young, the right-fielder, is regarded by many competent judges as the most brilliant player in President John Arnold Heydler's whole organization. Yet this new recruit is not far ahead of Burns, Kauff, Chase, Doyle, Fletcher, Zimmerman, Barnes, and other members of McGraw's team in point of natural skill.

Cincinnati's Reds, managed by the capable Pat Moran, include such stars as Groh, Roush, Kopf, and "Dutch" Reuther—the last-named having been developed into a crack left-hand pitcher. Grover Cleveland Alexander's return to the Cubs after serving a year in France has been welcomed in Chicago. Rogers Hornsby, for whom the St. Louis Cardinals refused an offer of seventy-five thousand dollars, has been the backbone of that team. It may be incidentally remarked that the players have displayed more interest in the success of their teams than during the existence of the defunct Federal League.

As a result of the war, baseball has obtained a foothold both in France and in England, where thousands of ball-games were played by the American soldiers. The

popularity of the game on the other side of the ocean, and the indorsement it received from our fighting men, doubtless helped to pave the way for the tremendous revival that has been so much in evidence this year in the United States.

THE REVIVAL OF BOXING

"Tex" Rickard is the man who has received credit for rebuilding professional boxing. Glove-fights, before the war began, had fallen into disrepute as exhibitions for the entertainment of the public; but the army and the navy became so deeply interested in the ring game that it soon won new favor. Rickard, the most daring of all promoters of boxing, startled the sporting world when he announced, last February, that he had agreed to pay a hundred thousand dollars to Jess Willard, champion heavyweight of the world, to defend his title. Rickard picked Jack Dempsey to meet Willard for a guarantee of $27,500.

In arranging this match Rickard correctly anticipated the revival of the public taste for sport. He selected Toledo, Ohio, for the battle-ground, erected a huge wooden stadium that cost $150,000, and, backed by the recently organized Army, Navy, and Civilian Board of Boxing Control, he successfully stood off all opposition to the bout.

AUGUST BELMONT, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOCKEY CLUB, AND A LEADING FACTOR IN THE REVIVAL OF RACING

From a copyrighted photograph by Baumann, New York

GEORGE W. LOFT, ONE OF THE PROMINENT OWNERS OF THOROUGHBREDS

The result, as all the sporting world knows, was that Willard was knocked out in three rounds by Dempsey—or, rather, that the former champion's seconds threw up the sponge just before the fourth round would have begun. The fight attracted thirty thousand spectators, who paid all the way from $10 to $60 for reserved seats. Rickard handed over $30,000 to charitable organizations in Toledo, and $45,000 to Uncle Sam in the form of a war tax. The gross receipts were $450,000, but the expenses were so large that they kept the promoter's profits down to about $60,000.

While Rickard didn't make a fortune out of the fight, he was the means of creating a new heavyweight champion, who is believed to be the greatest of all fighters. The victory of Dempsey was immensely popular, and the match interested men in all walks of life all over the world.

Since the downfall of Willard, boxing has received a fresh impetus in England and

in France. Great Britain has a new heavyweight champion in Joe Beckett, who won the title by knocking out a giant named Frank Goddard. Jimmy Wilde, the English flyweight champion, also defended his title successfully in a twenty-round bout with Pal Moore, an American boxer.

Georges Carpentier, the French heavyweight champion, returned to the ring in July after an absence of five years, and stopped Dick Smith, an Englishman, in quick fashion. It has been planned to stimulate further interest in the manly art by matching either Beckett or Carpentier with Champion Dempsey. If this battle materializes, it will be decided next year on American soil, inasmuch as Dempsey will refuse to box in England. The other American title-holders are Mike O'Dowd, middleweight; Jack Britton, welter; Benny Leonard, light; Johnny Kilbane, feather; and Pete Herman, bantam. All these champions, and many other capable performers, are taking part in the new boxing boom.

COMMANDER J. K. L. ROSS, OWNER OF SIR BARTON, THE CHAMPION THREE-YEAR-OLD OF 1919

A GREAT YEAR FOR THE TURF

Racing would have been snuffed out during the war if it hadn't been controlled by the all-powerful Jockey Club, of which Major August Belmont is the leading spirit. The maintenance of the breeding industry was the paramount issue. Prominent American sportsmen, including R. T. Wilson, H. P. Whitney, George W. Loft, Joseph E. Widener, A. K. Macomber, John E. Madden, and others, stood by the "sport of kings." They set an admirable example for other breeders and owners who were inclined to lose faith in the future of the American turf.

The Maryland spring meetings of the present year indicated what would happen later in New York. One of the Southern tracks, all of which operate the paris mutuel betting system, handled a daily average of seven hundred thousand dollars in the machines, yielding a profit of more than forty thousand dollars a day. There are no mutuels in New York State, and professional book-making and cash betting are illegal; yet with the oral system in vogue, the New York tracks have been patronized by larger crowds this year than at any time since the repeal of the Percy-Gray laws. On several occasions as many as thirty thousand people have enjoyed the races at Belmont Park.

The revival of the turf has resulted in the appearance of better race-horses. The great Sir Barton, owned by Commander J. K. L. Ross, is the champion three-year-old of 1919, with Purchase and Eternal as his nearest rivals. Man o' War, up to the Saratoga meeting, appeared to be the best of the two-year-old colts. While Jockey Loftus stands at the head of his profession, Laverne Fator, a seventeen-year-old rider, is the latest sensation, and soon there will be others.

Of the veteran trainers who have figured in the revival of racing, James Rowe, Andrew Jackson Joyner, Walter B. Jennings, H. G. Bedwell, and Frank D. Weir have played leading rôles. Weir, by the way, has saddled nearly two thousand winners—which is a record for the American turf.

Great Britain partly suppressed racing

THE GRAND STAND AT BELMONT PARK, LONG ISLAND—THE RACE MEETINGS OF THE PRESENT YEAR AT THIS FINE TRACK HAVE ATTRACTED CROWDS NUMBERING AS MANY AS THIRTY THOUSAND PEOPLE

during the war, but with the restoration of peace the popularity of the sport has been strikingly demonstrated. The classic Derby was revived at Epsom Downs last June,

Golf is another sport which calls its devotees into the open air, and which enjoys nation-wide popularity. It has never slipped to a stage calling for a revival, for its ad-

WALTER HAGEN, OF DETROIT, WINNER OF THE NATIONAL OPEN AND METROPOLITAN OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS OF 1919

From a photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

and was witnessed by nearly sixty thousand people. In France, too, where some of the finest race-courses in the world are located, the game has begun to take a new lease of life. Even in Germany the turf is said to be unprecedentedly popular.

vance in favor ever since its introduction here has been constant. It did, however, like everything else, receive a check during the struggle with Germany, though throughout that period of stress the ancient game "did its bit" in a manner equaled by few

others. With the nation's leading amateurs, such as Charles Evans, Jr., Francis Ouimet, Jerome Travers, Oswald Kirkby, Max R. Marston, and Bobby Jones, devoting the greater part of their leisure time to Red Cross matches, many thousands of dollars were raised for that most worthy cause.

Of necessity, championships were omitted after America entered the war, the feeling

ROBERT T. JONES, JR., OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA, RUNNER-UP IN THIS YEAR'S AMATEUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

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S. DAVIDSON HERRON, OF PITTSBURGH, WINNER OF THE AMATEUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP, PLAYED AT PITTSBURGH IN AUGUST

Copyrighted by the International Film Service, N. Y.

being well-nigh unanimous among golfers that titular events would be ill-timed. With the struggle ended, however, the competitive phase of the game has once more sprung to life—so much so, in fact, that the number of tournaments is amazing.

One of the objects of the Metropolitan Golf Association is to help member clubs to arrange meetings, and to avoid conflicting

RALPH DE PALMA, A LEADING AUTOMOBILE RACER

dates by officially sanctioning events in open weeks—a task that has become exceedingly difficult this season. Even the veterans who helped to make golf history many years ago are playing invitation meetings, not desiring to win prizes so much as to mingle with old associates. It has been estimated that more than a million people are on the links each day in America.

The leading professionals in the country at the present time are Walter Hagen, of Detroit, and Jim Barnes, representing the Sunset Hills Golf Club, near St. Louis. In June, Hagen gained the national open championship at Brae Burn, defeating Mike Brady, of Oakley, after a tie. This pair of home-breds finished the regular seventy-two holes with scores of 301 apiece.

Barnes did not take part in the metropolitan open at North Shore, but Hagen went there and won with a total of 294, three strokes better than Emmet French, who finished second. Barnes easily outstripped Hagen in the Western open at

LOUIS CHEVROLET, PROMINENT IN AUTOMOBILE RACING, A SPORT WHICH HAS DRAWN GREAT CROWDS TO THE TRACKS AT INDIANAPOLIS AND SHEEPSHEAD BAY THIS YEAR

THE YALE CREW OF 1919, VICTOR OVER HARVARD AT NEW LONDON—THE MEMBERS OF THE CREW, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, ARE P. ALLEN, S. Y. HORD, L. G. ADAMS, J. J. SCHIEFFELIN, W. MEAD, C. S. PAYSON, D. DRISCOLL, C. C. PETERS (STROKE), AND R. CARSON (COXSWAIN)

Cleveland, winning with a seventy-hole total of 283, Leo Diegel being second with a score of 286.

Amateur titles to be decided early in the season were the metropolitan, Western, and New Jersey. Oswald Kirkby won the M. G. A. honors at Brooklawn, defeating A. L. Walker, Jr., in the final, after a close match, while Harry Legg won the Western title at St. Louis. In the New Jersey final,

THE HARVARD CREW OF 1919—THE MEMBERS OF THE CREW, FROM LEFT TO RIGHT, ARE E. PIERSON (COXSWAIN), D. LEIGHTON (STROKE), CAPTAIN F. B. WHITMAN, D. H. MORRIS, M. OLMSTEAD, J. LINDER, E. BREWER, C. F. BATCHELDER, AND W. DAVIS

WILLIAM M. JOHNSTON, WINNER OF THE LAWN-TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1915

From a photograph by Thomtson, New York

at Deal, Max Marston gained the honor for the second time in five years, defeating a club-mate, F. M. Wild, in the final. The United States Golf Association team, headed by W. C. Fownes, Jr., of Pittsburgh, defeated Canada decisively over the course of the Hamilton Golf and Country Club.

Miss Alexia Stirling, of Atlanta, at the time of writing, was the national women's champion, no competition for the title having been held since 1916. Miss Marion Hollins won the women's metropolitan at Arcola, defeating Mrs. W. A. Gavin, after three extra holes; while Mrs. Ronald H. Barlow, of Merion, won the women's Eastern title, at Apawamis, with a score of 177 for thirty-six holes. The metropolitan team won the Griscom cup, defeating the Philadelphia women by twelve points to three in the decisive match.

RICHARD NORRIS WILLIAMS, 2ND, WINNER OF THE LAWN-TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1914 AND 1916

From a copyrighted photograph by Levick, New York

Up to this year there has been no new national amateur champion since Charles Evans, Jr., won his crown at Merion in 1916. On that occasion he defeated Robert Gardner, another Chicago golfer, in the final round.

Lawn-tennis has received world-wide impetus since the war. The new boom first appeared on the courts of France and England, and was directly due to the splendidly managed competitions arranged by the American Expeditionary Forces. These tournaments brought out the best players of the various nations, and were a preliminary to the international matches for the Davis Cup, which attracted entries from France, South Africa, Belgium, and the British Isles to determine the challengers of the Australian holders of the trophy.

ROBERT LINDLEY MURRAY, WINNER OF THE LAWN-TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP IN 1918

From a copyrighted photograph by Levick, New York

To the astonishment of court followers,

the crowds that turned out to witness the matches on the turf of the Racing Club, Paris, and at Queen's and Wimbledon, London, surpassed all records. At the height of the competitions in Paris, when André Gobert was winning, ten thousand spectators were present. As for the courts in England, the entry lists and attendance figures were extraordinary.

There was something more, for Mlle. Susanne Lenglen, the wonderful French girl, gained the English championship in women's singles—which for the first time was called a world's title. She appeared to be a marvel in many ways, and she will probably pay a visit to the United States next year.

Another remarkable tennis-player was developed abroad in the person of Gerald L. Patterson, a twenty-three-year-old Australian, who is a protégé of the famous Norman E. Brookes. Patterson created a furor wherever he appeared, and was due to appear in America before the publication of this magazine. In the opinion of many tennis experts, his most notable achievement was his defeat of Brookes for the world's championship singles at Wimbledon. While he played with rare skill on other occasions, the youngster's great victory in England appeared to overshadow his other performances.

In the opinion of many observers, the season of 1919 on the American courts has surpassed the brilliant competitions of 1914, when the late Anthony F. Wilding and Norman E. Brookes conquered Maurice E. McLoughlin, Thomas C. Bundy, and R. Norris Williams for the Davis Cup. There was an interesting return to the game, this year, of men who formerly held its highest honors. McLoughlin, the old hero, was again in the fray. So were his former partner, Bundy; Williams, champion in 1914 and 1916; and William M. Johnston, titleholder in 1915.

ROWING AND FIELD SPORTS

Rowing was a dead sport in 1918, largely for the reason that the big universities abandoned aquatics as soon as we declared war; but in June of this year Yale and Harvard renewed old relations on the Thames at New London, Harvard winning the freshman and junior eight events, while Yale triumphed with her varsity crew. The national regatta at Lake Quinsigamond, near Worcester, Massachusetts, in August, was a brilliant success, and developed many new oarsmen of quality. Next year the Poughkeepsie intercollegiate regatta will be resumed on the Hudson, and rowing men hope that Pennsylvania, Cornell, Syracuse, Columbia, Princeton, Annapolis, and possibly West Point will be represented.

Amateur athletics, which were compulsory in the army and the navy, brought out excellent material for track and field sports, swimming, boxing, basketball, wrestling, and football, which never would have been developed under other conditions. Several millions of American fighting men became interested in these branches of amateur sport. Among the first-class performers thus developed were Lieutenant Robert Simpson, the world's champion hurdler, and Lieutenant Robert LeGendre, the new all-around sensation who won the pentathlon at the Penn relays. Simpson and LeGendre were winners for the victorious American team during the Inter-Allied games in the Pershing Stadium.

College athletics came back last spring with all of the old enthusiasm, Cornell scoring a victory in the intercollegiate track and field championships. A glance at the membership lists of the New York Athletic Club, the Boston Athletic Association, the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, the Chicago Athletic Association, and the Illinois Athletic Club will disclose many college stars registered by the Amateur Athletic Union as competitors.

Automobile racing, always a thrilling and dangerous pastime, was restored to favor first at Indianapolis and later at Sheepshead Bay, where the leading drivers of the world participated. De Palma, Chevrolet, Resta, and Wilcox carried off big money prizes in the presence of huge crowds of spectators.

Before long we shall be beginning a new football campaign which will revive the historic battles at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and other important universities. Football is a major sport, and all red-blooded Americans are interested in it—which means more record crowds in the New Haven Bowl, the Cambridge and Princeton Stadiums and Franklin Field, as in the days of old. In November the army and the navy, represented by the Annapolis and West Point elevens, will resume their football relations at the Polo Grounds in New York, and there will doubtless be an immense concourse of spectators.

The Birth of Prometheus

TRANSLATED BY B. J. STOLPER FROM THE FRENCH OF PIERRE LOUYS

Illustrated by J. Scott Williams

"DID YOU NOT KNOW, BEST OF OLD MEN, THAT CLESIDES WAS DOING THE QUEEN'S PORTRAIT?"

IN the green gardens of white Ephesus, we were two young apprentices, with Bryaxis, the gray ancient. The old man had just seated himself on a bench of stone as colorless as his own face. He said nothing, but drew careful, aimless lines in the dust with the end of his worn staff.

Out of respect for his great age, and for the great and even more venerable glory that was his, we remained standing, our backs against two dark cypresses. We did not venture to open our lips what time he remained silent. Motionless, we stared at him with a sort of worship of which he seemed aware. Our young hearts warmed toward him as toward a lone survivor of those great departed whom we wished we had known. We loved to have him show himself to us, mere children that we were, born too late to hear the heroic voices; and, foreboding future days in which no man would see him more, we sought in silence the invisible clues which bound this man to his remarkable achievements.

That brow had conceived, that thumb had modeled in the clay sketch, a frieze and twelve statues for the tomb of Mausolus; the five colossi reared before the city of Rhodes; the Bull of Pasiphaë, which made to dream the eyes of women; the formida-

EDITORIAL NOTE—It is strange that Pierre Louys should be practically unknown in this country and "officially" undervalued in his own—for he has never been elected to the French Academy, though his literary stature is head and shoulders above that of most of its members. Indeed, Jean Richepin is the only one of them who approaches him in the vividness and the intensity of story-telling that make the antique world quicken and glow for us into palpable life. There is nothing stilted, nothing pedantic in the work of Pierre Louys. He *is* the Greek of the heroic days. Read the story printed here. Out of a brief and threadbare anecdote given by Seneca, the French writer has created a tale which, in suspense, in harmony, in poignant horror, has few rivals.

ble Apollo of bronze; and the Seleucos Triumphant of the new capital. The more I contemplated their maker, the more it appeared to me that the gods must have fashioned with their hands that sculptor of light, before descending unto him, that he might reveal them to men.

Suddenly a rapid step, a shrill whistle, a gay call — and little Ophelion bounded among us.

"Bryaxis!" he exclaimed. "Hark to what the whole city knows already. If I am the first to tell you, I'll offer—a bean to Artemis. But first, greetings! I had forgotten."

Out of the corner of one eye he gave us a quick wink that might have passed for a greeting, unless it was meant to signal:

"Prepare to marvel!"

And immediately after he plunged into his news.

"Did you know, best of old men, that Clesides was doing the queen's portrait?"

"It was mentioned to me," answered Bryaxis.

"But the end of the story—was that mentioned, too?"

"So there is a story?"

"Is there? You do not know a thing! Clesides came quite expressly from Athens, eight days ago. They led him to the palace; the queen was not ready. She had the temerity to be a little late. At last she appeared on the scene, greeted her painter with a bare nod, and posed—if you call it posing. It seems she fidgeted incessantly, under the pretext Sappho once gave. Clesides blocked in as well as was possible, with a good many gesticulations, and in vile bad humor, as you can imagine. His very sketch had not been finished, when lo and behold, the queen whirled about and declared she wished to pose for her back!"

"She gave no reason?"

"Her back, she said, is as perfect as the rest of her, and must appear in the painting, too. In vain Clesides protested that he is a painter and not a sculptor; that no one peers behind a panel; that it is impossible to draw, on the same surface, a woman in the round. She replied that it is her will; that the laws of art are not her laws; that she has seen the portrait of her sister as Persephone, of her mother as Demeter, and that she, Stratonice, all by herself, will pose as the Three Graces!"

"That's not bad," said Bryaxis. "Continue."

"Clesides was raging angry, the more so that he betrayed nothing. He completed his study of the back, the queen rose, demanded that he come again next day; he accepted and left her." Ophelion crossed his arms truculently. "Next day, do you know who was there, waiting for him? A servant-girl, on a footstool!

"'Stratonice,' she said, 'is tired this morning. She will not sit for you any more, master; and so I have taken her place, because the picture must be finished. That is what she has decided!'"

We shouted with laughter, and even Bryaxis hardly suppressed a smile.

"The slave was not badly made," Ophelion continued gaily. "Clesides clung to his scruples to the extent of giving her cramps of stiffness, that she might the more nearly resemble her mistress. Then he informed her dryly that he had no further need of her, and went back to his lodgings with his sketches."

"Good for him!" I cried. "The queen was making a laughing-stock of him."

"On the way, as Clesides was passing along the mole of the merchants, he perceived a sailor who, some one had told him, visited the queen in secret, though no one had proof of the fact. It was Glaucon; you know him. Clesides had him brought to his lodgings, paid him, posed him, and four days later had finished two cartoons, which showed him and the queen in each other's arms."

"Precisely what she had bargained for," I interrupted.

"Rather more than less. Last night—at what hour nobody knows—Clesides fastened the two painted panels to the wall of the palace of Seleucos. I suppose he managed to escape in some vessel after his public vengeance, for there was not a trace of him to be found."

"The queen will surely die of rage!" we exclaimed.

"The queen? She knows all about it, by now; and if she is furious at bottom, she hides the fact wonderfully. The whole morning, an enormous crowd surged in front of those scandalous bulletins. Some one told Stratonice, who demanded to see them, too. Followed by eighty persons of her court, she walked down and paused before each of the two subjects, approaching and retreating, in order to judge by turns detail and ensemble. I was there in the crowd. And as I followed her, shivering with my

eyes, asking myself which of us she would have put to death, her fury broke. 'I do not know which is the better,' she said calmly, 'but both are excellent.'"

We clamored approval, but Bryaxis merely raised his eyebrows, and his lined face took on the additional furrows of surprise and respect.

"She has proved at least no less temperamental than impudent," he remarked. "The story is really odd. But why so exultant, children? It seems to me that the rôle of the artist was hardly as telling as that of the model, in the anecdote I have just heard."

"Exultant!" retorted Ophelion. "If the queen had dared, she would have had Clesides pursued even beyond the seas, and killed like a dog. But then the whole Greek world would have considered her a barbarian woman—she who longs to believe herself an Athenian. Stratonice holds Asia in her hand like a bit of rag; yet she gave way before a man whose sole weapon was a ball of wax. In these days the artist is the king of kings, the only inviolable being that lives under the sun. That is why we're so exultant!"

The old man curled his lips disdainfully.

"You are young," he replied. "In my time, too, they repeated the same formula, and perhaps with more reason. When Alexander timidly attempted to explain why such and such a painting seemed good to him, my friend Apelles bade him be still, saying the very youngsters who ground his colors were laughing at him; and Alexander apologized. Ah, well! I have never found that that sort of anecdote was worth the trouble taken to relate it. No matter what the respect or the arrogance of the king toward the contemporary painter, the paintings are neither the better nor the worse for it. All that is a matter of great indifference. But on the contrary, it may be good, and even great, that an artist dare and have the strength to set himself, not merely above some king whose army passes along his walls, but above and higher than human laws, higher even than divine laws, on the day when his muses command him to tread underfoot that which is not of them."

Bryaxis had risen.

"Who has done that?" we murmured.

"None, perhaps," said the old man, a dream of far days in his eyes, "none, unless it were Parrhasios. And yet, did he do well? I believed so, once. To-day, I no longer know what to think."

Ophelion threw me a puzzled glance; but I could tell him nothing.

"We do not understand you," I said to Bryaxis.

He strove to set us on the track. "The Prometheus," he said in a whisper.

"Yes?"

"You do not know? You do not know how Parrhasios painted the Prometheus of the Acropolis?"

"We have not been told."

"You know nothing of that horrible scene—of the tragedy of death and groans out of which came that painting, in blood, like a child from a birth-bed of pain?"

"Speak! Tell us the whole scene; we know nothing of it."

For an instant the gaze of Bryaxis hung suspended above our young heads, as if he were hesitating to plunge into our souls, so suddenly, such a recollection. Then he seemed to come to a resolution.

"Very well! Yes—I will tell you."

II

WHAT I mean to recount to you, young men, took place in the last year of the hundred and seventh Olympiad—the same year in which Plato died. It is quite fifty years ago.

I was then in Halicarnassus, and had just completed, after five years, my part of the work on the tomb of Mausolus. I was starting for Chalcis.

"The Euripus," I said to myself, "is not overwide; and from Aulis, by way of Tanagra and the Archanian road, I shall soon reach Athens."

The sea voyage was disagreeable. I was very shabbily treated, although I took up but little room in my corner. Of course, my name had not then the repute it carries to-day; and the Mausoleum was much too new to elicit great respect. I was a citizen of Athens; the other passengers inquired no further. Athens had been unfortunate, and that was enough to draw their jeers and insults to her and to me.

One morning, when the sun had already passed the peaks of the eastern heights, we landed at Chalcis, in the midst of an immense crowd. I lost myself among them with pleasure.

On inquiry, I learned that outside the city gates an extraordinary market was being held. Philip, King of Macedon,

upon the fall of Olynthus, after having razed the city, had led into slavery the entire population—eighty thousand persons. The sale had been going on for two days. It had been calculated that it would last as much as three months. Chalcis, therefore, swarmed with strangers, both buyers of slaves and sightseers.

With great difficulty I shouldered a passage for myself between innumerable animated groups. I was at a loss as to how to pursue a progress so disputed, when I beheld in front of me a majestic procession before which the crowd gave way.

Six Sarmatian slaves advanced, two and two, each bearing a weight of gold and several naked swords stuck into his girdle. Behind these came a tiny negro, holding horizontally, like a cup from which libations are poured, a long crozier of pink cedar bound with a cord of gold—the august staff of the master. Finally, gigantic and ponderous, crowned with flowers, his beard impregnated with perfumes, his tall shoulders towering above the two lovely girls whose slender necks he encircled with his arms, I saw Parrhasios himself, draped in a purple robe, his great feet crushing the verdure. He seemed the Indian Bacchus incarnate. His eyes fell upon me.

THE SLAVE-SELLER, QUITE ALARMED, ADVANCED WITH PLEADING GESTURE

"If you are not Bryaxis," he said, drawing his brows together, "how have you dared to assume his features?"

"And you, if you are not Parrhasios, the son of Semele, who is it has given you those vast ambrosial locks, that Dionysiac stature, and that robe of purple woven by the Graces on Naxos?"

He smiled. Without even disengaging his arm from the charming support which extended it, he stretched forth to me, like a golden plaque above one of the girls, his great hand laden with rings.

"Chariclo," he said to the young girl on his right, "entwine my friend with an arm that will be sweet to him, and let us continue our promenade. Soon the sun will be too ardent for your burden not to suffer."

So we all set forth again, our arms interlaced. Parrhasios invested our advance with a vast and rhythmic cadence, pompous as a hexameter, in which the tripping steps of the women beat out the dactyl.

In three words he had enlightened himself as to my works and my life. At each response from me, he said with animation: "Perfect!" curtailing explanation. Then he began to speak of himself.

"You must understand clearly that I have taken you under my protection," he said; "for no citizen of Athens, except myself, is safe with the Macedonian. If the least dispute had brought you before the judges, I would not have given two obols this morning for your independence. Now you may ease your mind."

"I am not," I replied, "of a timorous nature; but I do not doubt that even here, and if you gave your name—"

"It is done," he declared. "I have announced myself. When Philip learned that I was about to do him the honor of visiting his new city, where his sutlers alone had been installed, he despatched on my road, at a distance of ten stadia from the Euripian viaduct, an officer of his palace. The man brought me gifts that were royal; among others, six colossi of the north and the two lovely girls whom you see—force to open my road, grace to adorn my person."

We were approaching the great auction. He stopped, and, measuring me with his glance:

"But you do not ask me what I have come to seek here?"

"I have not dared," I replied.

"I have come from Athens to Chalcis in order to find a model, my son. Ah, you are surprised! I quite expected that."

"A model? There are none left, then, between the Academy and Piræus?"

"Four hundred and forty thousand, for me," said Parrhasios proudly; "the population of Attica. And yet I seek a model at the Olynthian slave-block. Behold the reason. You will understand it."

He towered to his full height. "I am doing," he said, "a Prometheus."

As he pronounced that name, he remained with rigid and open lips, and all the horror of his subject passed into the fold of his eyebrows.

"Prometheuses, you will know, are to be found under every portico. Timagoras sold one. Apollodorus attempted another. Zeuxis believed he had power to achieve one. But why recall so much of pitiable painting? Prometheus has never been done."

"I can believe you," I replied.

"There have been reproduced naked peasants, fastened to wooden crags, the face twisted by gods know what manner of grimace that savored of toothache; but Prometheus, forger of fire, Prometheus, maker of man, and his struggle with the god-eagle amid mountains and thunder—ah, no, Bryaxis, that has not been done. That Prometheus, awful, overpowering—I see him, as I see your face; and I will nail his image to the wall of the Parthenon."

As he uttered this, he released the two girls, took his golden staff from the tiny bearer, and swept it in large gesture through the air.

"For two months I worked at it," he went on. "I had found superb crags in the dominions of Crates, on the promontory of Astypaleus. All my studies were finished. The ground of my landscape was ready. The line of the figure was in place. And all at once I was checked, absolutely, for I could not find a head. Oh, if it had been a matter of a Hermes, of an Apollo, or of a Pan, every citizen of Athens would have been proud to pose for me. But to take for my model a man whose high genius glows in his face, and to truss that man by his feet, by his fists, to the sort of dais I must use—you can see that that is not possible. One may not dislocate, in that manner, the limbs of any but a slave. And those people have the heads of brutes! They are Enceladuses, Typhons; they are not Prometheuses! Why? Because we lack slaves

who once were free-born Hellenes. Very well. Philip is bringing us those. I have come to take them where he sells them."

"An Olynthian?" I said, shuddering. "A vanquished ally? But where will you do this painting?"

"In Athens!"

"On the soil of Athens your slave will be free."

"He will be what I wish."

"But then, if you hold him captive, are you not afraid that the laws—"

"The laws?" said Parrhasios with a smile. "The laws lie in my hand like the folds of this mantle that I throw over my shoulder."

And with a magnificent movement he wrapped himself in purple and in sunlight.

I CAME ALONE ON HORSEBACK ACROSS ATTICA

III

THE Olynthian slave-market stretched before us. As far as the eye could see, and extending in an unbroken line of six broad, parallel avenues, platforms of planks had been laid on low trestles, rising to about mid-thigh of the passing crowds.

The population of an entire city was massed there, before another multitude—the one chattels, the other buyers. Eighty thousand men, women, and children, their hands bound behind their backs, their feet hobbled with degrading ropes, waited there, the greater part standing, for the unknown master who would lead them away toward some mysterious point in the Hellenic world.

Parrhasios penetrated into the principal street, in which were exposed, to right and left, the young men and the maidens who had seemed worth setting forth at highest price. To my amazement, I caught nothing of sadness in their rather curious glances. Human sorrow has its bound; and youth sees it very, very soon.

The crowd around them surged and jostled, eager to examine, more undecided in the buying. Few decided quickly in the midst of such a display of wares. The slaves were handled a good deal. Hands tested the muscles of a leg, the delicacy of a skin, the breadth of a virile fist. And then the same people passed on to the neighboring platform, hoping to find still better.

Parrhasios paused for an instant at the feet of a budding adolescent, whose tall, slender form was a harmony in white.

"Here," said he, "is a pretty child."

At once the seller hurried over.

"The prettiest girl in the auction, lord. See how erect she is, and how white! Sixteen years old yesterday."

"Eighteen," corrected the girl.

"You lie, by Zeus! She is no more than sixteen, lord. You must not believe her. Look at her black hair, piled high with the comb. When she loosens it, it falls to her haunches. Look at her hands, at her long

fingers, which have never even touched the distaff."

Parrhasios struck the dry soil with the tip of his sounding staff.

"Take off these shackles that mar her grace — and quickly," he commanded. "Let her put on her garments. I have bought her. What is her name?"

"Artemidora," she said.

"Very well. Artemidora, know that you are now in the train of Parrhasios."

She opened her great eyes, hesitating naively. "You are — could you be the Parrhasios who—"

"I am he," responded her master.

And placing her in the keeping of the people who accompanied him, he resumed his forward march.

Presently the great painter deigned to offer me explanation.

"White limbs—martyred on a peak in Caucasus—the young maiden would make a dainty picture. Yet I did not acquire her in the design of completing, with her, the Prometheus of which I have told you. She shall serve me as model for certain figure sketches, with which I relax my mind during my leisure hours, and which are far from being, you must know, the least noble part of my work."

We walked on for a long time in front of the trestles. The throng had grown even denser. The sun burned more and more unbearably in that vast, shadowless plain, amid that rolling human surf. Artemidora had garbed herself, first with her white tunic, then with her virgin-girdle clasped below her breasts. Her hair had disappeared within the apex of a bluish veil that enveloped her whole form. She turned around frequently to look at us; and I noticed then that, with her resumption of clothing, she had reclothed, as it were, a new soul. Her girlish face had become transformed.

We had traversed, thus, a full half of the principal street, when Parrhasios stopped, stretched forth his hand, and cried:

"There he is!"

I approached, expectant and curious.

The man he had designated was about fifty years of age. Of towering stature and excellent proportions, he had a broad forehead, a powerful, muscular frontal arch. His nose was bold and straight-cut, his nostrils sensitively spread, his ears deep and perfectly turned. His hair was gray, his beard still quite brown, short, and rolled in round clusters as markedly expressive as his features. The strong cords of his throat formed a sort of pedestal, which imparted, through the singular harmony of the whole, a still grander authority to the glowing intellect of his eyes.

Parrhasios accosted him.

"What is your name?"

"Outis."

"I am not asking you for poetry, my good fellow, but for the name you received from your father; and you will answer me, I think."

"For a month I have called myself Outis. If I ever bore a more ancient name, it does not suit me to tell you which."

"Why?"

"Nor to tell you why, you son of a thief!"

Parrhasios, beside himself, grew more purple than his mantle. The slave-seller, quite alarmed, advanced with pleading gesture.

"Do not listen to him, lord; he speaks like a madman. And it's pure malice on his part, for he has more brains than I. He is a physician. For knowledge, as for skill, he hadn't his equal in Olynthus. I'm only giving you common rumor, repeated everywhere, for he was famous far into Macedon. Give me thirty drachmas, and Nicostratus will be your thing forever."

"Nicostratus," repeated Parrhasios to me. "So! I know that name."

Turning to the dealer, he commanded: "Strip off his garments."

Nicostratus submitted indifferently, passive and disdainful.

"Set him face front. Very well. Side view—back view—now to the right—his face again. Done! It's a bargain."

He clapped his hand lightly on my shoulder, and said to me, in an undertone:

"Youngster, superb!"

I answered nothing; for I felt myself stirred by a shiver, which was almost one of envy.

Fifty years have passed—the space of a human life. I have seen thousands of models, but never one to compare with Nicostratus of Olynthus. He was the personification, the very statue of man in all his grandeur, at the age when force has become power. Parrhasios named him Prometheus; but any name, no matter how eternal, would have been no less worthy of this new slave. That man in my workroom for the space of a year of labor, and I

would have done enough sketches to fill my whole career with Zeuses, with Plutos, with Poseidons, with the fifteen graybeard gods who are called the Dominators. As he stood there, he evoked Olympus to his feet. When he extended his arm, one saw the trident within it; when he raised it aloft, behold the thunder! The lines of his shieldlike chest-muscles merged at his shoulders with a slow, majestic curve that invested his every move with divinity.

IV

I CAME back alone, on horseback, across Attica. During my absence of five years my creditors had sold what little property I possessed; and I put up modestly at an inn in Athens for the long weeks that must precede my renewal of old connections.

Parrhasios had followed me after several days' interval. On learning to what an unpretentious place I had had my baggage carried, he refused to let me accept any hospitality but his, and sent me word that he was awaiting me.

The next day I went to his house, alone, and for the purpose of declining his generous offer.

He occupied, midway between the Ceramica and the Academy, a palace of marble and bronze, near the little house where Plato lived. His gardens stretched far down the slope to the blue banks of the Cycloborus, and, rising again on the other side, encircled the white building with gorgeously useless trees.

Parrhasios received me on the threshold of the great interior court that served as his work-chamber. Standing there, draped as ever in sweeping purple silk, the fillet bound about his brow like an Olympian god, he opened his great arms to me. And presently I followed at his side into the illustrious hall, the birthplace of masterpieces, wherein I was deeply stirred to set foot once more.

"My Prometheus?" he said, in reply to my question. "No, I no longer feel it as a thing complete and rounded. This Nicostratus has great need of being meditated for a time, and I foresee that my first conception of the subject will be shattered to fragments from the moment when I make his personality to enter in my theme. In a day or two we shall see."

I asked him if he were resting; but I hardly knew his energy. Painting was life itself to him. At midnight he had returned from the journey; and in the early morning he had already begun a new picture.

"Come," he said to me abruptly. "I am glad that you can see it; the little thing is a marvel. I have never done anything lovelier."

The panel, only just begun, reposed obliquely on an easel of sycamore wood, the two uprights of which arched back, almost at the point of contact, in two golden swan-throats. I leaned forward respectfully and beheld a singular object, but one which did not surprise me in the workroom of Parrhasios. His picture represented a sylvan landscape charming to see, in which a sleeping nymph lay stretched on rounded hip and elbow, her arrows in her hand. A satyr bent before her; behind, a second satyr roughly grasped her white shoulder, without troubling her young slumber, which must truly have been profound.

But when I raised my eyes again, I perceived, some paces away, stretched on a broad bench, Artemidora between two barbarian Sarmatians, who had just posed with her.

"Yes," Parrhasios explained, "I love these sketches of life. Socrates, who began by being a bad sculptor before becoming a good philosopher, wished to see me paint love as glances and thoughts. That was absurd criticism. Painting is design and color; its tongue speaks in gesture alone. I have painted Achilles in the moment when he slays. His brooding wrath I leave to the poet. But enough of that; we understand one another."

He seated himself before his easel, and with his fine brush, the handle of which was ivory inlaid in reed, he added the final touches to the sketch, to accentuate still more its impeccable design. Then two of his young apprentices brought him his instruments.

"You see," he said to me, smiling, "I have ceased painting in distemper. Here is wax and here are irons, according to the new method. Those youngsters of the school of Sicyon— I will beat them on their own ground!"

The hours passed without my having felt their flight, except when Parrhasios commanded: "Relax!" Toward the end of the day he rose, calling to the apprentices:

"Have the plate heated! It is finished," he added, turning to me.

Presently the glowing plate was brought,

WITH GREAT STRIDES HE CROSSED THE APARTMENT AND DREW ASIDE THE TAPESTRY. THERE WAS NICOSTRATUS, BOUND IN CHAINS

with the sparks flying from it. He seized it by the staple with long-armed tongs. Very slowly he passed it back and forth before the painting; the wax rose to the surface, fixing in the dry wood its multi-colored soul.

And that was how there was finished, between the dawn and the dusk of one day, the "Nymph Surprised" of Parrhasios, which is now at Syracuse.

Parrhasios gazed at his work with careless satisfaction; then, suddenly raising aloft his fine, expressive hand, he shouted:

"Yes! This is the training before the battle!"

"What battle?" I demanded, bewildered.

He seemed astonished that I had not comprehended. With great strides he crossed the apartment and drew aside the tapestry. There was Nicostratus, bound in chains. He raised his eyes to ours. Parrhasios drew himself up till he towered to his full height before the Olynthian, and passing his fingers through his beard, murmured:

"My battle — of the god against the human being!"

V

I REMAINED in Athens for a whole month, busied with personal affairs which did not permit of my return to the house of Parrhasios.

Since the downfall of the Olynthians, Athens had truly been a city of sorrow and mourning. The slave-mart of Chalcis, the selling of a whole people, that scandal and affront at the very gates of Attica, was the subject of every conversation, the brooding thought behind every silence.

Against Philip nothing could be done. Crates did not want war, and Demosthenes himself did not ask it any longer. But Eschines, returning from the Peloponnesus, had met on his way troops of Olynthians herded like beasts, and his mere contact with that exodus of slaves had been enough to rouse, at his voice, the people's indignation against the guilty cities.

On a certain day, however, public feeling became even more bitter; for it was learned that in Athens itself a citizen was holding as captive an unfortunate Olynthian woman. The man was arrested, judged, condemned to death on the spot.

Alarmed, I beheld Parrhasios menaced by a like fate; and, dropping everything, I went down to his palace to warn him, if there were still time to do so.

Doors were closed and hangings down when I appeared at his wall. The slave refused to let me cross the threshold. I was driven to insist, to reveal my dread, to swear my visit concerned the life or death of his master. At last he let me by; and traversing at a run the great, empty gallery, I raised the arras.

I shall never forget the slow, grave look that Parrhasios gave me, when he saw me enter. He was on his feet, painting, and he loomed gigantic before a panel of black wood of almost his own height. The vaguely stormy sky gave his tall form an almost superhuman semblance. So serene was his face that the features stood out no longer; the very lines and furrows had become effaced, as in the lifeless clay of a man incredibly old and couched in the peace of the dead.

He spoke no word. He no longer looked at me. The hot rod held in his fingers, he carried the melted tears of wax between the cup and the upright panel with a hand as sure and as quiet as if he had created the world with gouts of color.

It was then, following his eye, fixed now on his work and now on a point in the vast hall, that I perceived, clamorous and naked, lashed by his four wrenched limbs to the brow of an actual crag, with every muscle heaving as he pulled desperately at four twisted ropes—Nicostratus!

For a long time I remained motionless, holding my breath, no longer knowing what I had come to do and to say. My brain drifted wholly on the marvels of vision. My other senses spoke to me no more; and I had less in me of thought than one has in a day-dream.

Suddenly Parrhasios pronounced one word:

"Scream!"

And his voice was calm as his brow and his gesture.

Nicostratus gave vent to a violent burst of forced laughter which shook the hall. He cried that he would not scream—that he was master of his face—that they could not bind his features, like his limbs, with ropes to the rock—that he would prevent the making of this picture! Then he vomited the foam of his rage in outbursts of insult.

The face of Parrhasios did not change by a line. He laid down the caustic which he held in his hand, slowly picked up another which was glowing at white heat on a near-by brazier, and, measuring the exact spot where the vulture in his picture gorged on the liver of Prometheus, said to a Sarmatian slave:

"Take it. To the right—under the last rib. Touch lightly, without penetrating."

Nicostratus looked at the fellow as he advanced toward him. His mouth set in a deathly smile, and his flesh shriveled; but not a word came from his lips.

But soon his eyes glazed. A dreadful sweat rolled down his temples. He began

to scream at first, then to moan in a voice shaken with sobs, like a little child.

Parrhasios, impassive, gazed on at his face.

How long a time did that last? I do not know. Till the evening, I think. I do not know at what hour I found the strength to drag myself out of that hall, for I was nerveless from head to foot. As I passed out through the door there was a sudden silence, and then I heard a voice in the distance:

"The fool! He died an instant too soon!"

When it became known in Athens, next day, how Parrhasios had achieved the "Prometheus Bound" that he destined for the Parthenon, there was heard in the city one great cry of horror.

The whole population surged in a mass along the Cycloborus road, rushing to attack the painter's house, the doors of which had been locked.

"An Olynthian! A free man! A man vanquished by the Macedonian!"

"The poison for his murderer!"

I mingled with the raging crowd, though not in order to save my friend; for I, too, thought that he deserved any punishment, and the screams of Nicostratus kept sounding in my ears. But I followed the tumult, whirled along by the maelstrom of bodies, and appeared with the throng under the besieged walls.

The mob shrieked for a long time. The house seemed dead. Not a slave appeared on the threshold, not a voice behind the tapestries which hung, motionless and closed, between the columns.

At last Parrhasios, between two opening curtains, appeared in the upper story, his arms folded over his royal robe, and his brow still bound with the sacred fillet.

A storm of shrieks rose up to where he stood.

"Assassin! Barbarian! Ally of Philip! Where is the Olynthian? We will give him a funeral like a conquering general. And the poison for you! The poison for you!"

Parrhasios let their rage break forth and abate. Then, grasping by the two sides of its panel, from where it rested at his feet, the "Prometheus" he had just painted, he raised it slowly and solemnly, at first above the balustrade, then above his own forehead, till he was quite effaced by it, and the masterpiece appeared in place of the man.

A spasmodic shudder shook the crowd, which surged nearer. A prodigious thing was there before it. The picture of human sorrow and of eternal defeat through suffering and through death, palpitated overhead. Before those countless eyes the summit of tragic grandeur stood there revealed for the first time.

They shivered. Many men wept. A silence as of a temple spread far out to the most distant lips of the multitude. And when scattered hooting, here and there, rose again for an instant, a thunderous shout drowned it in a tumult of acclamation.

THE PALET OF THE WINDS

Who says the winds are colorless
  Was given two eyes in vain.
Our good west wind is green and gold;
  For, running with wood and plain,
It is fresh with the green of cool green leaves,
  And flecked with the gold of grain.

And the wind of the north is black and white—
  Black as the brand of frost,
Streaked with the white of arctic ice
  Where many a hope is lost;
While the east wind is a foggy gray—
  The gray of a hope that's crossed.

But the wind of the south is a blazing blue,
  Sapphire, turquoise, and smalt,
Mixed with the blues of the southern seas,
  Stippled with sun-dried salt,
With here and there a blue-hot patch
  From the blinding tropic vault.

Vincent Sanger

The Man Who Buried God

BY WILLIAM MERRIAM ROUSE

Illustrated by Charles Sarka

OLD men say that the *bûcherons* of Three Rivers were the wickedest, the bravest, and the gayest scoundrels between Montreal and the gulf. However that may be, they at least had sufficient sense to take a certain precaution before they went into the woods for a winter's chopping. These stout hearts of Canada were not without a wholesome respect for Providence, and each year, after they left the town, and before they reached the camps, they used to bury God in order that He might not be a witness to their sins.

This was a simple expedient which gave rest to the conscience as well as a wide range of action; but it gradually fell into disuse, like many old customs, so that even a generation ago there were few men in lower Canada who could tell exactly how the ceremony should be performed in order to be effective. For there must be no mistake in the rite, no error in the words which are said to the devil after the first part is gone through with.

One of the men who knew how was Hercule Grenier, of Petit Pré; and he had it from an old *bûcheron* of Three Rivers who had had an eye gouged out beyond Lake St. John, and who was never able to swing an ax true after that. Grenier did not seek the information to use, for, although he was as tough in body as a young oak, he seldom had much to confess at Easter; but he absorbed the details out of curiosity, and they lay in his mind unthought of until his hour of trial came. Then they flashed up as bright as a new knife—just as the devil always comes, swishing his tail, when a man is tempted.

The roots of an event are like the roots of an elm-tree—they reach far and have no end; but for convenience in this case it is as well to say that the great experience of Grenier became inevitable when he arrived at Petit Pré at the beginning of March, after a short winter in the woods, and met Joseph Poulin. Poulin, who would skin a rat if he could get a cent for the hide, wore a new suit of clothes and an uninterrupted grin upon his weathered visage. Moreover, he had had his hair cut, and he looked wonderfully well scrubbed.

"*Bonjour, mon ami!*"

Poulin stopped and gave Grenier a hearty slap upon the shoulder. Now they had never been friendly enough to justify that, and even at the moment a suspicion of some motive for such effusiveness began to take form in the mind of Hercule.

"Where is the *fête?*" he asked, shaking hands without any enthusiasm. "I didn't suppose anything but your own wedding could persuade you to buy new clothes, Joseph."

Poulin laughed with the laugh of a man who is trying to renew his youth at fifty. He winked abominably and poked Grenier in the ribs.

"That's just it!" he exclaimed. "I'm going to be married to-morrow at La Concession, and I want you to come. I haven't told anybody but you here in Petit Pré, old fellow. Will you come? We can go over together."

Because of certain circumstances of the previous autumn, to which Hercule had given no thought at the time, his suspicion took sudden and definite shape. He felt himself seized by a cold and deadly anger—an anger so great that its very ferocity steadied him and gave him self-control.

"Mlle. Lortie?" he asked, dreading to hear the answer.

"You've guessed it!" Poulin chuckled fatuously. "I'm a lucky man."

"You are," agreed Hercule. "And I suppose your luck was helped out somewhat by a loan to that good-for-nothing father of hers?"

"Oh, *là là!*" said Poulin, with mock in-

HERCULE THRUST A DEAD BRANCH INTO THE SNOW SO DEEP THAT THE BOTTOM OF THE ROUND HOLE HE MADE WAS LOST IN SHADOWS

dignation. "Perhaps so, but we mustn't say anything about my father-in-law."

That was the whole story, then, thought Grenier — Françoise Lortie sold by her father to this dried-up miser!

"And of course *mademoiselle* is willing?"

"But yes! Why not?"

"Why not, indeed? It merely occurred to me that perhaps Lortie had been caught with some moose-meat again, and had to have money to keep out of jail."

In spite of his nut-brown complexion, Poulin changed color. His eyes wandered from the face of Grenier to the distant, snow-covered Laurentides.

"He did get into a little trouble last

month, and he goes to court soon," admitted Joseph; "but, of course, that has nothing to do with *mademoiselle*."

"Certainly not!" Hercule could not keep the sarcasm wholly out of his voice. "*Eh, bien!* I wish you all the luck you deserve."

"But you'll come?" Poulin said eagerly.

"Why do you want me, if there are to be no other guests from Petit Pré?"

Poulin became embarrassed, and again found it necessary to poke Grenier in the ribs.

"You understand, old fellow," he said. "We might as well be friends—is it not true?"

"We might," replied Grenier; and just then the devil gave him an idea which shaped his next words almost unconsciously to himself. "Don't wait for me to-morrow, however, for I shall be obliged to go late, and I may not get there until the ceremony is finished."

"As you like," responded Poulin, with a degree of disappointment; "but I can count on you in the end?"

"Yes; in the end."

With that Hercule turned sharply and went on toward his house. He had endured all he could of Joseph Poulin. He wanted to think, to get a fresh grip upon his mind, and he persuaded himself that he wanted to fight the idea which had begun to permeate him like a poison.

II

Before Hercule Grenier had gone into the woods the previous autumn, Françoise Lortie had promised to become his wife. They had not been formally betrothed, for neither of them had considered it necessary at that time. Was it not enough if they loved each other? They were to have been betrothed and then married immediately upon his return in the early spring with his winter's wages. He had hurried out of the woods while there was still three feet of snow and a month's more work to do, because he had saved the sum they had agreed upon—and if he had not met Poulin, he would be on his way now to claim Françoise.

With clenched fists and jacket still unbuttoned, Hercule sat before his kitchen fire and went back in imagination over the events of the autumn. If it had not been impossible to think of Mlle. Françoise and such an old curmudgeon as Poulin with the same thought, he would have seen then that there was something brewing in the mind of the man. More often than not, when Grenier had gone to call upon her, he had found Poulin there, with his feet under the stove, his pipe drawing well, and a grin cracking the parchment of his face.

But on these occasions Poulin had given his whole attention to M. Robert Lortie. Except for a polite "*Bonsoir, mademoiselle,*" he had paid no attention whatever to Françoise; he had seemingly remained as oblivious of her as he was of the Lortie house-cat. On these evenings Hercule and Françoise talked undisturbed in a corner, Lortie and Poulin chuckled over their pipes and gossip by the fire, while Mlle. Herménégilde Lortie—a much older sister, whom the good God had not endowed with any degree of beauty—knitted under the lamp in a silence which she did not break even when her father asked for a match or an armful of wood for the stove.

The studiously disinterested conduct of Poulin had lulled the natural watchfulness of a lover into profound sleep. He had let Hercule go away, believing that he was without a rival, and then, at the first opportunity, he had seized a hold upon the Lortie family.

Certainly old Robert was something of a reprobate, and the daughters were tremendously proud. So Grenier reasoned, and he quite understood how Françoise had been willing to sacrifice herself to save her father from the certainty of jail. For to jail he would go if he were unable to pay the heavy fine imposed for killing a moose out of season.

Why had Poulin urged the presence of Grenier at his wedding? He was afraid. He wanted peace. Hercule knew well enough his own reputation for a short temper, and he felt a certain satisfaction as he thought of the apprehension which his rival must have suffered. *Bien!* It would not be apprehension without just cause! Grenier was quite sure of that much, but it was not until night had fallen, and his kitchen fire had long been cold and dead, that he permitted the idea which had first come to him during his conversation with Poulin to find definite recognition in his mind.

He meditated murder.

Now, in order to understand how a brave man and a good Christian could think seriously of such a thing, it is necessary to look more closely into the soul of Hercule Grenier. In the first place, he loved Françoise Lortie with a devotion which is

seldom found outside the covers of books; and he had loved her, and her alone, since the days when they quarreled and played together in the snow as children. A smile from her kind blue eyes or a touch of her strong little hand was worth more to him than a year's wages. His life had been built toward the time when they could marry.

She was being sacrificed through a false sense of duty. If Robert Lortie had killed a moose out of season, then let him go to jail, thought Grenier. He would not permit the girl, young and beautiful and happy, to make her life a continuous misery.

If she became the wife of Joseph Poulin, in five years she would be bent, withered, and broken with hard work—or, at least, such was his sincere belief. He had seen many such women in the homes of Canadian *habitants* who thought as much of a dollar as did Joseph Poulin.

By killing Poulin, Hercule could save her. Old Robert would go to jail, Françoise would be free, and in all probability Hercule would have to spend the remainder of his life in the far north. Very well! That was not too much of a sacrifice to make for the girl he loved.

But there was another aspect of the affair which he could not so easily settle. What of his soul? He would surely go into eternal torment for such a crime as that; and even a stout-hearted man will hesitate before giving himself up to Satan for all eternity.

Then reappeared the old memory of the trick by which the *bûcherons* of Three Rivers had made themselves immune, it was said, from punishment for iniquities which may not even be mentioned among polite people. If it would work for them, why not for him?

Hercule remembered perfectly all that the old chopper had told him. Slowly, as he sat through the long hours of the night, his resolution became fixed. To-morrow he would first bury God and then kill Joseph Poulin before the old man could take Françoise Lortie for his wife.

III

With dawn Grenier was ready, but he had several hours yet to wait before he could accomplish his errand of wickedness. He went out, however, beyond the little village of Petit Pré and hid himself on a wooded height from which he could watch. The sun was well up when he saw a figure, which he recognized as that of Joseph Poulin, leave the cluster of whitewashed stone houses and strike across the fields toward the forest in the direction of La Concession. A light snow had fallen on top of the crust, and he had no difficulty in picking up the trail of Poulin's snow-shoes.

Now was the time to make himself safe against future punishment, if any virtue lay in the practise of the men of Three Rivers. Hercule broke off a dead branch and thrust it deep into the snow—so deep that the bottom of the round hole he had made was lost in shadows. Then from his pocket he took a pint bottle of rum and poured the contents slowly and carefully into the hole so that not a drop was spilled upon the surrounding snow—a waste, truly, but a necessary part of the ceremony. After this had been done he addressed Satan with a certain formula which is now half forgotten, and which it would be sacrilege to repeat here. Moreover, it is best to let such knowledge rest with the bones of the men who put it to use.

Grenier rose from his knees with a curious feeling of mingled satisfaction and uneasiness. He knew that he had done the thing correctly in every detail, and yet he could not bring himself to go light-heartedly about the accomplishment of his purpose, as no doubt the *bûcherons* of Three Rivers had been accustomed to go about their winters of wickedness.

Nevertheless, his resolution was not shaken in the least. He belted his hunting-knife on the outside of his jacket and set out upon the trail of Poulin, with no thought of turning back or of withholding his hand under any circumstances.

It was about an hour later that he glimpsed Joseph through the trees, moving with the eager speed which a man is supposed to use in going to his own wedding.

Should it be now or later? There were no ears to hear the cries of Poulin; no hands to give him aid in his hour of death. Apparently he was not armed, and his strength was as nothing to the muscles of Hercule—muscles made like springing steel by many winters with the ax and the cross-cut saw.

Ahead of Poulin lay a ravine which Grenier knew well. In winter the bottom filled with many feet of drifted snow, and usually huge lips of crust curled over the edges. Hercule did not want a chase. He

had no mind to have Poulin play the part of a hunted rabbit, for fear his own resolution would fail him. So he waited until his quarry was abreast of the ravine, with no chance to run, before he increased his speed for the beginning of the end.

Poulin had begun to skirt the ravine, at a safe distance from the treacherous snow of the edge, when Hercule advanced upon him, no longer making any effort at concealment. At the faint swish of Grenier's snowshoes the older man turned. Surprise gave place to pleasure in his face, and he lifted a hand by way of greeting.

"*Bonjour,* Hercule! So you came early—"

He broke the sentence abruptly, while in his glance a vague and uncomprehending terror began to manifest itself. For Grenier had drawn his long hunting-knife, and he came on in silence, swiftly. He decreased the distance between them to twenty feet, to fifteen feet.

"What's the matter? Hercule, are you mad? *Dieu seigneur!*"

Joseph Poulin, realizing that death was upon him, turned and plunged blindly away from Grenier. Before he could stop himself he was beyond the line of safety at the edge of the ravine—marked by brush and young trees showing above the snow. He tried to turn back, to save himself by clutching at the branches of a dead spruce; but his weight had rested upon the overhanging crust, and he went down in a flurry of snow, to flounder in the yielding drifts at the bottom.

"HERCULE!" HE CRIED, STRUGGLING TO REGAIN HIS FEET. "I WILL NEVER SAY ANYTHING! I PROMISE TO BE AS SILENT AS A MONK!"

IV

Hercule Grenier halted at the edge of the cliff. Here was a situation with which he had not reckoned. Poulin was out of his reach, but at the same time he was in a situation no less dangerous than when he had been within range of the knife. If he remained where he was now he would freeze between two days, for the ravine was a trap from which it was almost impossible to get out in winter unaided.

The sides of this cleft in the forest floor were perpendicular, or nearly so, for the whole short length of it. One end was at the base of a mountain, from which a small stream issued; and at the other end the ravine bottom became the edge of a cliff over which, in summer, the water of the brook fell a hundred feet. At this season such water as descended went down underneath a sheath of ice on which there was no possibility of obtaining a footing.

The watercourse, which had been worn down through the ages, was a prison. In

HE WORKED HIMSELF OUT EASILY UNTIL THE LIMB BENT TO HIS WEIGHT AND PERMITTED HIM TO DROP INTO HIS ENEMY'S PRISON

summer a young and active man might scale one of the sides of the ravine; in winter, with ice filling the crevices of the rocks, and with no footing save soft snow, in which a man sank to his middle, there was little hope of getting out. Poulin had broken one of his snow-shoes in the fall, so that he was helpless even to move about seeking a place of egress.

As a cat watches the struggles of a wounded mouse, so Hercule watched him while he tried to get his feet back into the snow-shoe harness. He at last succeeded in that and stood upright; but he could not walk because of the broken snow-shoe.

It appeared now that Joseph Poulin was no longer astonished. He stood looking up at Grenier with speculation in his eye despite the evident fear of death which was upon him. Although Poulin was by no means a coward, he was not one of those men to whom *le bon Dieu* has given the resolution to face all things, including the unexpected, with a clear eye, a firm hand, and an untroubled heart. He had no stomach for dying.

Hercule was beginning to be more troubled than his prisoner. A swift thrust with a knife, for which he had steeled himself, was one thing; a slow and piecemeal killing was another. Already his heart had forbidden him to leave Poulin to die there of the cold, and it was beginning to argue forcibly against a renewal of the attack. Moreover, if he leaped down into the ravine to finish his rival, how could he get out afterward? That, in itself, was a puzzling problem.

"*Eh, bien!*" said Joseph, although a trifle shakily. "What next—eh, Hercule?"

That was a question which Grenier would have liked to answer. His glance wandered, seeking possibilities, even though he had not decided what he could do with them. And he found one, ready-made for his purpose. A hickory—which has more resilience than any other tree of the north—hung over the edge of the cliff a few yards away; one of the limbs reached horizontally over the ravine. From the end of that limb he could swing down, and, with something as firm as the body of Poulin to stand upon, he could jump and catch

it again when he wished to get out. Here, then, was a means to his end.

He put his knife back into its sheath and walked toward the hickory-tree. Poulin, divining his purpose, went pale and lifted his hands in an involuntary appeal for mercy.

"What have I done to you?" he cried. "Hercule! Are you going to kill me?"

In silence Grenier walked to the tree. Keeping his snow-shoes on for later use in the ravine, he leaped into the air and grasped the limb with his mittened hands. He worked himself out easily until the limb bent to his weight and permitted him to drop into his enemy's prison.

Poulin was now wholly in the grip of terror. He tried to kneel, and flopped over in the snow like a wounded chicken.

"Hercule!" he cried, struggling to regain his feet. "I will never say anything! I promise to be as silent as a monk! I will give you—"

"Bah!" Grenier barked the exclamation. "Get up and come here! I am going to give you a knee-up to this limb. In three minutes you will be out of here, in ten you will have fixed your snow-shoes, and in an hour you will be at La Concession ready for the wedding!"

V

Joseph Poulin had been too badly handled by his emotions within the past quarter of an hour to ask questions. In spite of his broken snow-shoe he managed to cover the short distance between them, going at first doubtfully and then with increasing confidence as he read sincerity in the countenance of Hercule.

"Kick off your snow-shoes," said Grenier, "or I can't help you up!"

He took one of Poulin's moccasined feet in his hands, set it upon his knee, and by virtue of the power that was in his back and arms lifted Joseph up until he was able to reach the overhanging limb. More like a squirrel than a man of fifty, the former prisoner went hand over hand along the limb until he was once more in safety.

Grenier picked up Poulin's snow-shoes and hurled them up to the top of the cliff—hurled them suddenly and with violence before the flood of mercy which he had experienced should ebb.

"Go on, damned scoundrel!" he yelled. "Get out of my sight before I call upon the devil to wither your legs!"

Poulin did not go. He stood instead with his weight on one leg, like an undecided hen, and gazed down upon Grenier with a mixture of curiosity, fear, and pity.

"You cannot get out alone," he said at length; "for even with your snow-shoes you sink in down there to your knees. You cannot jump and catch the limb without something to stand on."

"It's lucky for you that I can't!" growled Hercule. "What do you care? You're safe."

"You will freeze."

"It is true"—sarcastically. "Will you have a mass said for me?"

"What will you do if I help you out?"

"I'll kill you!" raged Hercule. "I'll put my knife into your liver and turn it around for good measure! I won't play the priest twice, I can tell you that!"

Poulin meditated. Grenier flung himself against the ice-covered wall of the ravine, only to fall back in a tangle of snow-shoes before he had mounted half his length.

Suddenly Poulin bestirred himself. He hobbled to the hickory and laid hold upon the overhanging limb, testing its strength with his weight.

"I am going to pull this down until you can catch hold of the end," he announced. "Hold on to it until I get clear, for it is not strong enough to bear both of us, and then you can come up. I shall have to take my chances with you, for certainly I can't leave you to freeze."

In silent astonishment Grenier saw Poulin go out along the limb until his weight bent it sufficiently to allow Hercule to grasp the end. Then Joseph worked his way back. When he stood once more at the edge of the cliff it was an easy matter for Grenier to pull himself up and return by the same route he had used in descending into the ravine. In three or four minutes he stood face to face with his enemy again.

Poulin had evidently realized how useless it was for him to attempt flight on account of the broken snow-shoe, and he awaited his fate with what resolution he could muster.

"*Voilà!*" he exclaimed, unbuttoning his jacket and digging into the breast-pocket of his shirt. In a trembling hand he held out a fat leather pocketbook, from which the green edges of Canadian bank-notes protruded. "You will not have to kill me to get it, and I will swear on the cross never to tell any one. Is not that enough, Hercule? Think! If I were in your place and wanted to rob, I would show mercy!"

pense of keeping old Lortie out of jail, as I have made up my mind to do. I'll follow you as soon as I can patch up your snow-shoes."

Like a man who has been dragged out of the icy St. Lawrence, Poulin took a deep and grateful breath. He put his feet into the harness, and, with an affectionate clasp of Grenier's hand, started swiftly for La Concession.

A minute later Joseph's meager back had disappeared among the trees; but Hercule did not go immediately about his task. There was too much for him to think of—the resolution to kill, the sacrilegious compact with the devil, the murderous intent with which he had twice advanced upon his supposed enemy.

But through these reflections, like a shaft of sunlight through gray winter clouds, shone the generosity of Poulin and his own failure to strike when Joseph had been helpless. The memory of these two moments warmed his soul and illuminated him within, so that he lifted his face to a patch of blue that showed through the overhanging branches of the firs and spoke aloud.

"One thing I have learned," he said softly. "God cannot be buried, for He is in the hearts of men!"

Shall We Ever Be Able to Visit the Moon?

IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT THE FEAT MAY SOME DAY BE ACCOMPLISHED, BUT THE DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME ARE VERY GREAT

By Charles Nevers Holmes

MANY of us have traveled around our world, a distance approximating twenty-five thousand miles. Shall we ever be able to travel from our world to the moon, a distance of about two hundred and thirty-nine thousand miles?

To-day, of course, we cannot do so; but it is not impossible that some day men may travel from our earth to the moon, and back again. No one at all familiar with the progress of modern science and invention will deny that such a journey is a future possibility. Indeed, it may be that to-morrow some stupendous discovery will revolutionize aerial navigation, and if this should occur, a journey to the moon would soon be occupying the minds and energies of terrestrial inventors and scientists.

Even with the assistance of remarkable discoveries, however, there will remain great difficulties in the way of traveling from the earth to the moon. The first of these is the force that binds us to our world's surface. This force, which we call gravity, pulls us toward the center of the earth, away from the moon, and it is so powerful that at present we know of no means by which to counteract it.

To break its chain, so that we can fly away from our planet home, would require a velocity of not less than thirty-seven thousand feet per second. Since the best modern guns can throw a shell with a speed of about three thousand feet per second, it is evident that we should have to be projected from our terrestrial surface about twelve times as fast in order to reach the surface of the moon.

Furthermore, because both earth and moon are in motion, we should have to make careful mathematical calculations in order to hit the mark. Otherwise, in case our sky-craft should miss the moon, we might go on traveling through space indefinitely, unless some planet, like Jupiter, were to capture us.

A DIFFICULT AND DANGEROUS VOYAGE

Moreover, there are other difficulties and dangers in making a trip to the moon. Our

sky-craft would have to be strongly constructed—very strongly indeed—to stand such a journey. Leaving out of consideration the friction and pressure upon it in passing through our atmosphere at such tremendous speed, there would be a great outward pressure from within it after we reached the vacuumlike environment of the ether.

In order to remain alive, we should have to be surrounded by practically the same conditions *inside* our craft as they were when we left the terrestrial surface. We should have to breathe, and to have about the same atmospheric pressure upon our bodies as at the surface of our earth. Therefore—unless some unpredictable scientific discovery should assist us—the walls of the craft would have to be exceedingly strong to resist the tendency to expand outwardly into the ether, thus causing some opening which might suddenly or slowly destroy us.

Again, the walls of our sky-craft would have to be very strong to resist possible collisions with aerolites — the small or large rock-fragments, popularly known as "shooting stars." When we remember that these bodies are traveling with a velocity of ten to forty miles per second not far from the earth's surface, and that our craft would be speeding some seven miles per second, it is evident that a head-on collision would not be a gentle one.

Moreover, when our sky-craft reaches the moon, its landing is not likely to be at all a soft one, since the moon possesses no known atmosphere to retard our speed, and the lunar surface is believed to be wholly rocky and hard.

Doubtless, were we able to hurl our sky-craft free from terrestrial gravity, we could to-day build a craft that would weather an ethereal voyage from the earth to the moon. Doubtless it could be constructed to stand the powerful attacks of pressure and of aerolites, as well as the sudden and terrific bump at the end of the route. Our astronomers of this twentieth century could certainly aim such a craft so that it would reach its destination, and it is probable that the crew would not have much to do.

VAST PROPULSIVE POWER NEEDED

But the power required to hurl a sky-craft, weighing perhaps ten tons or more, with a velocity of about seven miles per second, from the terrestrial surface and through the atmosphere into the ether, would be nothing less than terrific. It seems an almost impossible thing to do, but future discoveries and inventions may put it in a different light.

We can calculate, at least approximately, how long such a voyage would take. Leaving out of consideration the acceleration of the sky-craft owing to the attraction of the moon, the average time would be about nine hours and a half. In other words, we could embark in America at 8 P.M. and disembark upon the moon before six o'clock the next morning.

But now another problem arises. After we have reached the moon, how are we to get home? That is a difficult question to answer, although, if we had the necessary mechanism to propel our craft, it would be easier to return to the earth than to go to the moon. Upon the lunar surface, owing to the smaller mass of the moon, the force of gravity is only about one-sixth that of our terrestrial gravity, and it would therefore require a velocity of only a little more than six thousand feet per second to overcome it. However, the voyage would be longer—about fifty-six hours. Thus the whole trip to the moon and back, if there were no delay, would take almost three days.

Shall we ever visit the moon? If we, or any of the generations following us, should travel to this beautiful satellite of ours, they would, according to the testimony of the telescope, find it to be indeed a waterless, weird, and wonderful place!

THE DOVE

APART from greed and strife,
And the tense strain of life,
The soul, like some white dove,
Irised in peace and love,
Broods with half-folded wings
On God's eternal things.

Hamilton Williams

The Make-Believe Limited

BY ROBERT J. HORTON

Illustrated by F. McAnelly

AT MANY POINTS ALONG THE ROUTE RODDY WOULD LIFT HIS EYES FROM THE BEAUTIFULLY PRINTED, SPLENDIDLY ILLUSTRATED PAMPHLETS, AND DREAM

RODDY EVANS worked in a linen store, but he *lived* in a different world —a world of purple mountains, of wide, sun-kissed plains, of deep, cool recesses of forest, of swift-running rivers and fields of living green, all peopled with his lively imaginings—a world of fair romance!

He traveled extensively—evenings.

Only the night before he had taken a trip to Salt Lake City. It had left him pretty tired. It had been after two o'clock in the morning when he finally returned. This had been rather a hard trip, too. He had made a mistake in figuring out one of his time-tables and had had to wait eight hours in Cheyenne.

Oh, he didn't actually *go* to Salt Lake, of course. He made this trip, as he made *all* trips, over the Mind Route. He took them mentally.

Still, it is aggravating to be laid up eight hours in a town like Cheyenne, even though one travels only on the Make-Believe Limited.

Roddy had enough time-tables in his room at Mrs. Stanley's select boarding-house on Manhattan Island to have stocked any information-booth in the country.

He kept this information right up to the minute, too.

As soon as a new time-table was issued, he secured a copy of it and immediately

threw the out-of-date folder away. He was sincere in his game.

Why, there were any number of railroad passenger-agents who had him on their mailing-lists as a bona-fide traveler and sent him new time-cards and other information regularly.

And hotels! He had literature from every big commercial hotel and important resort in the United States and Canada. He hadn't done much with Mexico, things being so unsettled down there.

When he decided, on some long winter evening, to take a mind trip, he went about the matter with painstaking method.

His destination decided upon, he carefully picked out his route. This was accomplished through the agency of the maps in the railroad time-tables. Next he got together all the literature bearing upon the cities and other points of interest along the route he had selected.

He laid out this reading-matter on his table, beneath his study-lamp, with the maps propped up behind. Then he took up the pieces of literature dealing with the first large city or resort on the route, and read them. He read all the other bits of information in their order, and thus traced his way across the country until he arrived at his destination.

It was great sport. It had the movies beaten a city block. It was mentally exhilarating, too. At many points along the route Roddy would lift his eyes from the beautifully printed, splendidly illustrated pamphlets, and dream. The walls of his little room would vanish and he would look out upon the wonderful crescent curve about the Susquehanna, or into the Yellowstone's land of geysers, or—with a little coaching from the California Raisin Growers' booklets—across the vineyards in the San Joaquin valley.

In this way he had " covered " an amazing amount of territory.

He had crossed and crisscrossed the Far West; slipped down one bank of the Columbia and up the other; followed the Missouri from Montana to where it merged with the Mississippi; traced his way across the deserts of the Southwest; sojourned among lakes and brakes in the South—and once he had " gone " to Alaska.

Alaska had been a long, hard trip. It had taken two months of preparation. He had to write north for booklets, and even then there was a mistake in one of them, and he had been put to the necessity of spending a night outdoors in White Horse Cañon—think of it!

He preferred the shorter, one-evening trips.

Louisville was a good one-evening trip. So was Detroit. St. Paul and Minneapolis were within one-evening distance, too. Salt Lake was about the longest one-night trip he had taken, due to the fact that there was so much to see—I mean, read about —in the Mormon city.

The Ozark country was a comparatively easy one-evening trip. San Antonio, on the other hand, was a good two-night jaunt.

And the grand tour of the Southwest—he took one of these grand tours twice a year—required the last three evenings in February and the first four in March! He lost time on that, though, because of a mislaid El Paso and Southwestern time-table.

The maid, he found out afterward, had put it under his gas-heater. This oversight on her part had compelled him to stay over an extra night in El Paso at an expense of six dollars and eighty cents.

Oh, yes; he kept careful account of the expense, too.

He had been very severe with Mrs. Stanley in this matter, even demanding that the maid be dismissed. However, the boarding-house proprietress made the matter all right by giving him a large map of the United States which she had stored in the attic. This proved very useful.

The incident of the mislaid time-table had not been the only accident in the grand tour of the Southwest. There was the matter of the stage trip out from the Grand Cañon. That had been a fool stunt. He had tried to cut across to see some petrified trees and then get back to the railroad at another point and had become lost. He had had to spend the night—a long, cruel mental night—on the desert, and a sand-storm had blown up!

Can you imagine it? On the desert, at night, in a sand-storm? Roddy could imagine it most vividly. The stinging sand had nearly ruined his eyes. He had found it necessary to wear glasses on succeeding trips to the Southwest. Moreover, after becoming lost, he had to buy a twenty-five-cent map of the State of Arizona to get out of the fix.

Being lost on the desert is no laughing matter, even if you are traveling in a hall bedroom in a New York boarding-house.

Yet that was only one of the harrowing experiences of the winter. It had been the worst winter for travel Roddy had ever known!

He had got tangled up on a jerkline railroad down in Louisiana and had to stay in the swamps for two days. He had taken cold and had to send for the doctor. Five dollars. Yes—and he had missed a day at work, although *that* hadn't bothered him much.

No, the thing that vexed him most was the carelessness of some underling in getting up that time-table. The going time had been given all right, but the coming-back time was missing. When Roddy turned about to go back to New Orleans he couldn't find any information about returning trains and there he had been—stalled.

Of course, he had brought a mental suit against the railroad company and the publishers of the rail-guide in which he had seen the time-table, but it had not been very satisfactory. He had to give up his December trip to South Carolina—a trip he always looked forward to—on account of it.

And then when he finally did get around

HE LEANED BACK IN A ROCKING-CHAIR AND ROCKED HIS AUDIENCE ALL OVER THE UNITED STATES

to take the South Carolina trip, he had lost his baggage and this had resulted in another suit. He had to spend a lot of imaginary time in the public library looking up the law, and the amount he mentally received in the end hardly amounted to as much as the baggage was worth. Roddy " carried " very expensive baggage.

On the other hand, there were many pleasant and compensating features to the game that Roddy played under his study-lamp in his hall-room.

There had been the time when he " rode " from Omaha to Chicago with the president of the road. Ah, that was some trip! He had aired his ideas quite thoroughly to the president, too.

Then he had " ridden " in private cars quite frequently. Once he had remained for the better part of a trip to Jacksonville, Florida, in the luxurious private car of a well-known wealthy family. That, also, had been a great trip.

II

These mental peregrinations furnished Roddy with no small amount of information about the country at large and its show-places, and his vivid imagination did the rest.

He talked about the West or the South or the North with equal freedom, exhibiting an intimacy with details which convinced his listeners.

He told his audiences of the beauties of the Columbia River country; of the rare colorings of Arizona skies; of the grandeur of the Colorado Rockies. And people believed him. Why not? They didn't know any different themselves in most cases, even though some of them had been there.

So Roddy never was disputed. People listened to him with genuine interest.

But underneath all the pretense, despite his fascinating game of mind travel, Roddy was possessed with an overpowering desire some day to go and actually see the wonders which he so ably described. For the farthest West he'd ever been was Trenton, New Jersey, and he had made that trip without wanting to go there at all.

He had been spending several evenings in Southern California, where a great deal of golf is played, according to hotel and resort booklets, and he had grown curious about the game. Somebody remarked that there were links at Englewood, New Jersey, so Roddy had gone up to One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Street, crossed on the ferry, and in due time appeared at the Englewood links to watch a game.

In some way he made a mistake on the way back and took the wrong car. He changed and took another car—another wrong one. He changed and took another, and still another, and kept changing and taking new cars until he wound up at eleven o'clock that night in Trenton!

This had constituted Roddy's greatest and longest trip—all taken by trolley and by accident.

It was hard to save money for actual travel on the sort of salary Roddy had been getting. Indeed, his latest and most substantial raise had come but a few days before. And a vacation of two weeks does not suggest the time needed for a trip of five or six thousand miles if one is to do much stopping off.

So Roddy had spent his last four vacations on a farm near a small lake in Jersey.

But this year he figured on something better. He had—as he put it—three thousand miles in the bank. By which he meant that he had a balance of about ninety dollars. Roddy now and then figured in miles—three cents to the mile.

In addition to this sum in bank, he would have two weeks' pay advanced him before he started on his vacation. This would give him, after some other necessary expense had been deducted, about one hundred and twenty-five dollars for his vacation trip.

It was Friday, and his vacation was scheduled to start the following Monday. Where would he go? He faltered as he studied his maps. To the far, far West? What was the name of that pretty little lake in Idaho where the whitefish came from? Or would Lake Chelan in Washington be better?

Lake Chelan was a thrilling thought. In a moment he was whisked away on the wings of fancy to the long, narrow lake among the pines of northern Washington.

He stood upon a towering peak, at the edge of a precipice two thousand feet deep, and looked out over the blue waters to the green of the pines on the distant shore. What was that? He leaned closer to the precipice and swung his binoculars to his eyes. A little squirrel was coming down to drink! What a beautiful sight; a little—

" Wake up, you nut!" said a fellow boarder, and Roddy realized that he was still in New York. He glared long and

balefully at the chap who so rudely shattered his musings.

III

He left the problem of deciding where to go for his vacation for final consideration on Saturday afternoon. And Saturday afternoon he decided to take in reality the last trip he had taken mentally in his room, and actually go to Salt Lake.

"To the red hills of Utah," he murmured dramatically as he packed his grips.

"To the desert that has been made to bloom like a rose; to where the sea-gulls follow the plows and pluck the worms from the furrows; to the wonder city of the West!"

Oh, there was poetry in Roddy! And, naturally, a phrase or two that he had read in Commercial Club folders lingered in his memory and now and then crept into his conversation.

His grips packed, his room-rent paid two weeks in advance, his other little errands all attended to, he started down-town to the consolidated ticket-offices to purchase his transportation.

Among the advertisements in the subway he noticed:

SPEND YOUR VACATION
AMONG TEN THOUSAND LAKES IN
GLORIOUS MINNESOTA

There now; there was something in that, too.

Salt Lake was a long distance away. Why spend so much time traveling? He could shoot through Pennsylvania by way of the famous Crescent Curve—which he wanted very much to see—stop a few hours in Chicago, and be in Minnesota overnight.

"Arrive Chicago 3.25 P.M., leave 8 P.M., arrive Minneapolis 10 A.M., leave 2 P.M., arrive Jewel Lake 5.25 P.M.," he quoted to himself. Why not?

He got out at the next station and returned on an up-town train. That evening he looked over his Minnesota literature and decided definitely upon the sojourn among the ten thousand lakes.

His decision was aided by the advertising phrase.

Just one lake—like the Great Salt Lake—wouldn't be so very much to talk about. But ten thousand lakes!—some topic for conversation there.

Why he could number them—the lakes. That would make it much more impressive. For instance, he would be able to address the boarding-house table as follows:

"I was walking under the trees on a narrow strip of ground between Lake No. 8720 and Lake No. 8721, when I saw a large flock of ducks alight on Lake No. 9103, some distance away."

That would certainly prove effective. It gave the impression, not only of unlimited lakes, but that he was well acquainted with each lake *by its proper number!* It would be a knock-out.

Next morning he took his grips and started down-town.

Again a message was flashed to him in the subway:

THE COLORADO ROCKIES
ESTES PARK
AMERICA'S PLAYGROUND

Why, of course!

What had ever driven Colorado out of his mind?

Colorado! Everybody was talking about Colorado, and he had come near missing it. What were a few lakes when one could get on top of a mountain peak, among the clouds, and look all over the United States!

He changed from the down-town train to an up-town train at the next station.

In his room he looked up the time-tables which would be needed on the Colorado trip. There was a train that night which made excellent connections with a good train out of St. Louis, but he couldn't go that night. He must leave New York by day because he wanted so much to see the great Crescent Curve. He had read a lot about that curve. See it coming back? No; he wanted to talk about it while out there among the tourists.

There was nothing to it but wait until the next morning.

He arrived at the big terminal about fifteen minutes before the time for his train's departure. He rushed to where he thought the ticket-office ought to be and found himself in the men's smoking-room. From there he managed to get around into the women's room, and then he retired to the big waiting-room and started all over.

He didn't know much about large stations. The hundreds of time-tables and booklets he had read had contained no information about stations except a map showing where they were located.

On his next trial he ended up in the baggage-room. This wouldn't do at all. He

looked at his watch. Five minutes left. Well, so long as he was there he might as well check his baggage. But he hadn't bought his ticket.

No, they wouldn't check his baggage without a ticket.

One minute was consumed in arguing about this, and then he plunged out into another vast room, down a flight of steps, and there were the trains.

The trains!

He thrilled all over. Every nerve tingled. He read the names of them and there was his:

GREAT WESTERN LIMITED

He started for it.

"Where's your ticket?" demanded the uniformed man at the gate.

"I haven't had time to get it, but I'll pay the conductor on the train," said Roddy.

"Nothing doing; you've got to have a ticket to get through here."

"But I ain't got time to get it before the train goes. I've got to go on this train. Why; I'm going to the land of everlasting snow!"

"Get out of the way now and let these people through. You can't pass without a ticket."

"But, I'm going to the top of the world, I tell you, for my vacation. I've got to go."

A stout arm fell upon his shoulder and moved him away.

He was in the hands of a station cop!

The last of the waiting people passed through the gate and the Great Western Limited pulled out while Roddy was telling it to the grinning officer.

There was nothing now to do but wait.

He had got lost in the terminal and missed his train. A humiliating thought.

He picked up a paper on a bench in the waiting-room and sat down to wait. On an inside page this announcement met his eye:

SEE AMERICA FIRST!
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN AMERICA
UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN
GLACIER PARK

Roddy laid down the paper. He had clean forgotten about Glacier Park. And after having read so much about it, too!

"The land of rainbow-hued crags and never-melting ice," he breathed. "And Going-to-the-Sun Mountain."

Going-to-the-Sun!

A name to conjure with.

How well it would sound in conversation! He imagined himself addressing the boarding-house table:

"That night I stayed at a quaint chalet in the shadow of Going-to-the-Sun Mountain. I will never forget the play of the sunset upon that majestic peak. All about me the pines reared their—reared their—"

That was bad; awful bad. Reared was not the word to be used there. Pines did not rear, he reflected. Well, what *did* they do? Stand silently? Why, to be sure!

"All about me the pines stood silently—"

That settled it. Glacier Park it would have to be. He would get an early start next morning.

Now it is queer what a ticket-agent can do. There he stands behind his wire barrier or flat-topped counter with countless threads of romance passing through his fingers, yet he grasps none of them. He is a mere atom. Art has passed him by without so much as a fleeting touch upon the shoulder. And never was this so well demonstrated as in Roddy's case.

By the mere mention of the round-trip fare and a subtle hint as to the cost of going through the park, a ticket-agent next morning blasted the would-be traveler's hopes of visiting Montana's wonder spot.

Roddy simply didn't have money enough.

Back he went to his boarding-house room.

This setback precluded the possibility of getting started anywhere very far away that day. And the next day was Wednesday. Practically four days consumed in trying to decide where to go for his vacation! There wasn't such a great amount of time left, he realized in a panic. And it *did* cost like the dickens to go West.

IV

NEXT afternoon Mrs. Martha Wilkins, proprietress of the Farmside House at Round Lake, New Jersey, addressed the company on her front porch as follows:

"That's a delightful young man who just came. He must have lots of money because he travels extensively. You should hear him tell about his travels. He's been everywhere. It's very educating to listen to him. He has come here every year now for five years to get a couple of weeks' rest. He says my place is very quiet and homelike and a good place to obtain rest."

"Like fun it is!" snorted a somewhat frayed bookkeeper, under his breath. "I've

MENTAL TRAVEL AND ACTUAL TRAVEL WERE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS

spent a week here looking for that and *I* can't find it!"

Romance lies at our elbows. It is only its glamour that is reflected in the distance. Roddy did not realize this or he would have paid more attention to Miss Florence Hanning from the start.

As it was, she became conspicuous by degrees due to the fact that slowly but surely she thrust herself into a commanding position in the front row of those who sat on Mrs. Wilkins's front porch at Farmside and listened to Roddy.

Roddy was at his best.

He leaned back in a rocking-chair and rocked his audience all over the United States. He took them on trips to the Northwest, the Coast, the Southwest, the Middle West, and just the West.

"Just the West" was Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Utah, and Nevada, he explained. And they listened. There was nothing else to do. They *had* to listen. And thus Florence Hanning came to have a great respect for Roddy.

"I should think it would get terribly tiresome to be doing such a tremendous amount of traveling," she said, thereby convincing him that she had more sense than most girls. "I should think the jar and jam of the cars, the harsh grating of the wheels, the singsong of the whining rails would get on your nerves!"

Roddy gave the girl a sudden, surprised look. With a panicky start he realized that he had won her interest because she thought he had actually *gone* to the places he had been describing. And he realized also that her interest was something he would like very much to retain.

"Y-yes, traveling makes people tired," he stammered uneasily.

"I'll get a cushion for your poor back," she said, and did so.

And Roddy laid back in his chair and rocked and dreamed, while Florence Hanning listened.

During the next ten days he led her all over the country. He took her to the Yellowstone, to Yosemite, to Santa Cruz, to the Grand Cañon, to San Antonio and quaint New Orleans.

"How wonderfully you can describe things," she said in evident admiration.

Roddy felt himself expand in the region of the chest. He had a good chest, too. For that matter, he was a clean-cut, good-looking young American of the average type, with hair the color of bronze and the eyes of the dreamer.

"How I would like to have traveled so much!" she sighed.

Roddy's heart warmed toward her as it never had warmed toward any girl before. She was good to look at, too.

"I should think you would feel a yearning to settle down," she continued.

Settle down! It suggested a new thought.

"A splendid-looking couple," observed Mrs. Wilkins as Roddy and Florence approached the house for supper after a short walk in the orchard.

"I wish there were fewer empty cans and more fresh vegetables here," snarled the frayed bookkeeper from the porch.

"I must put them together at the table," thought Mrs. Wilkins; then aloud: "Fresh vegetables ain't everything, Mr. Smith."

Evidently they were not, because neither Roddy nor Miss Hanning seemed to notice the absence of them.

"I've got to go to Salt Lake next month," observed a man at table that night.

"Better go by way of Chicago," said Roddy quickly. "Get in there on any of half a dozen good trains that leave New York in the morning: leave Chicago at 7.10 P.M., arrive at Omaha at 9.10 in the morning; leave Omaha at 9.30, and arrive at Cheyenne at 10.05 that night; get out of there at 11.10—same train and a good one, too—and breeze into Ogden at three o'clock the next afternoon; leave there at 3.30 and at 4.30 you're in Salt Lake. Not a hard trip, all told."

They looked at him in admiration.

Florence glowed with pride.

"I guess you're right," said the man who contemplated the trip. "But I've got a side trip to Butte in the bargain."

Roddy was on the job in the twinkling of an eye.

"Leave Salt Lake at 1.15 in the afternoon on the Short Line and you're in Butte next morning at 4.05," he chirped. "Finish your business that day, waltz out of Butte, same route, at 4.35 that afternoon and at 8.30 next morning you're in the Mormon village again."

Did he know his subject? Well, I guess he did.

"Most people prefer the electric between Ogden and Salt Lake," continued Roddy in a somewhat bored tone, "but that's a mere question of taste."

The bookkeeper came out on the porch after supper with the information that he would leave next day.

"I'll take the 4.18 out of here to-morrow afternoon," he said sourly.

"You mean the 4.19," corrected Roddy. "The time has been changed. That train leaves a minute later since the first of the month."

Oh, boy!

Florence fairly beamed upon Roddy while the bookkeeper swore under his breath and thought futilely for an answer.

"And if I were you," Roddy went on, "I'd take the 3.08. That train makes six minutes better running-time and better connections all around."

Next day the man actually did take the 3.08.

That night—their last at Farmside—Roddy and Florence walked in the purple twilight.

"You must feel so sorry that your quiet, restful sojourn here is ended," she said.

"Yes; I *am* sorry," he replied quite truthfully.

"How hard it must be to think of taking up traveling again," she sighed.

"Traveling *is* hard," he answered evasively, "especially now since the government took control."

"I should think you would settle down."

There it was again—settle down. Why not?

"Won't you tell me where you live?" he asked gently.

She gave him her card and received his in return.

They both appeared startled when they read each other's address. They lived on the same street and in the same block—in boarding-houses!

She looked at him and he grinned fool-

ishly. So they were both untraveled workers! They laughed together. And instantly she was in his arms.

"Will you marry me?" he whispered.

"Yes," she answered, "but you must promise to stop *traveling*. You must settle down. Will you promise?"

He promised.

V

THEY were married early in November.

Florence had insisted upon a wedding trip to Chicago, although Roddy had actually tried to get out of it. Mental travel and actual travel were two different things.

"Will you go down and get the tickets?" she asked the day before the wedding.

"No, no," he replied, remembering his experience with the ticket-agent when he had Glacier Park in mind for his vacation. "No, I wish you'd get the tickets and everything—I don't want to be bothered with it; it bores me dreadfully; makes me terribly morose."

So *she* got the tickets.

She led the way to the waiting train at the terminal.

She told the porter about the grips and saw to it that they had pillows and magazines and newspapers.

"I want you to take everything off my hands," Roddy declared.

And she did.

They sat in their seat in the Pullman of a long limited train racing across Pennsylvania.

Roddy was speechless. He looked bored. She felt sorry for him.

But he wasn't bored. If the truth must be told, it was Roddy's first real trip and he was scared stiff!

Beneath the friendly shelter of a newspaper across their laps, Roddy laid a clammy hand upon that of his wife. The answering pressure was somewhat reassuring.

They smiled into each other's eyes.

The train conductor came through on his way to check up the transportation.

Roddy bucked up sufficient courage to pluck him timidly by the sleeve.

"Conductor, will you please tell us how long it will be before we come to the great Crescent Curve?"

"Crescent Curve?" said the genial conductor, beaming upon them over his glasses. "Why, we passed that an hour back!"

SONGS AND RIVERS

SONGS and rivers faintly rise
Far from haunts of mortal eyes;
Secret springs known but to fays
Dwelling in the purple haze
Quivering on the mountain heights,
Basking in the hushed delights;
Songs, like rivers, softly start
From the spring of Hidden Heart.

Songs and rivers blithely flow
To the valleys far below;
There are fertile lands to bless,
Fields awaiting fruitfulness;
There are white-sailed sloops to bear,
Filled with precious freight and fair.
Songs, like rivers, tune a lyre
To the Land of Heart's Desire.

Songs and rivers seek their rest
In a sea's embracing breast;
Binding with a silver chain
Mountain, valley, mead, and main;
Blest by Heaven, though far their course
From the mystic, silent source.
Songs, like rivers, trysting keep
In Heart's Haven, calm and deep

Clarence Urmy

William Shakespeare as a Baseball Fan

EVIDENCE WHICH MUST CONVINCE ALL THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT THE PERSONALITY OF THE MASTER DRAMATIST IS REVEALED IN HIS PLAYS

By Charles Veatch

Author of "Was Shakespeare a Barber?" etc.

OF the numerous traditions connected with the story of William Shakespeare, many are puerile and unworthy of serious consideration by the conscientious biographer. Others are amply sustained by careful study of the plays, wherein are laid bare not only the soul of the poet, his aspirations and yearnings, but much of his every-day life.

One of these traditions recites that Shakespeare was for several seasons owner and manager of the Stratford baseball-team, and an active participant in the games. Incredible as this may at first appear, one only needs to consult his writings for convincing evidence of the fact. When one reads the histories, comedies, and tragedies of the great master, and finds mention of bases, home-runs, strikes, errors, stealing bases, sneaks, scores, games, umpires, plays, pitchers, flies, and catches, what else can one think? These technical terms are an essential part of the game, and must have been employed by one familiar with its every phase; they could not be the result of chance or mere caprice.

The poet's commendatory notices of racing, hunting, angling, archery, and other sports, point to a vigorous body, a wholesome delight in manly recreation, and a hearty love of outdoor life. Indeed, it cannot be doubted that Shakespeare was an "all-round sport." Why, then, should he not have been a baseball "fan"? There can be no doubt whatever that he was a lover of the game, and that he was known as such to all the fans of Stratford, who, he says, "had no other book but the score and the tally"—other literature being strictly tabued. No doubt his references to the "nine worthies" in "Henry IV" and "Love's Labour's Lost" are in generous recognition of the sterling virtues of the home team.

A number of Shakespeare's characters, at one time or another, had something to do with baseball at Stratford or other towns in the circuit. *Coriolanus* got into the game early, his first work being in the outfield, where, according to *Cominius,* he "stopped the fliers" at the age of sixteen. The one cherished ambition of *Henry VI,* in his callow days, was to "catch the fly"; later he learned to swat the horsehide, frequently for three bases. *Othello* delighted to get away from those "most potent, grave, and reverend signiors" and take a hand in the game, in supreme disregard of the color line. He was a good batter who looked well to his averages, and his first remark after making a run was:

"Have you scored me?"

The Moor seems to have played at second base. It isn't a very far cry from a cushion on the diamond to a pillow in the hand, and perhaps "on this hint" he acted in his last interview with *Desdemona.*

Very prominent among the Stratford nine was *Sir John Falstaff*—bluff, hearty old *Jack,* famous as a sprinter in those days when he "felt some salt of his youth." On one occasion, as he sent a red-hot grounder to left-field fence, the bleachers rose as one man and roared:

"Run up, *Sir John!*"
"Go, go, sweet *Sir John!*"

These words of cheer enabled the rogue

to pull through for a home-run. In after years, his increasing rotundity not permitting active work, he served as umpire, and made that celebrated decision:

"There's no scoring but on the plate."

The printed report of the game reads "pate"; this, however, is clearly one of those provoking misprints that have brought many commentators to grief. Only one error was ever charged up to *Sir John*, and this was in his last days, when *Mistress Quickly* declared that she saw him "fumble."

In this connection probably the worst case of fumbling on record is that of *Young Marcius*, described in "Coriolanus" when he essayed to stop the ball:

"He caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes and up again; catched it again."

One of the most important units in a ball-team is the pitcher, and our poet has much to say anent this dynamic individual. Students of physics, and, of course, grandstanders and bleacherites, are familiar with the "curves" described by the ball, which are so puzzling to the man at bat; they give an advantage to the "twirler" that Shakespeare calls: "spherical predominance." On one occasion *Claudius*, being up for his turn, became so "rattled" by the arts of the sphere-propeller that *Benedick* was constrained to shout from the bleachers:

"Now you strike like a blind man."

A similar instance occurred in a game with the Shottery nine, where the batter was greeted by the silvery voice of *Rosaline* from the grand stand:

"Thou canst not hit it, hit it, hit it,
Thou canst not hit it, my good man."

Rosaline was correct in her forecast; *Claudius* "fanned out," even as the mighty *Casey* was predestined to do some three hundred and odd years later.

Travers once described a game to the *Duke of Northumberland* where there was some fine base-running. He mentioned one, especially, who "seemed in running to devour the way." This expression furnishes an instructive lesson in the evolution of modern slang; we now say "scorch the boulevards" or "burn up the road."

The Shakespearian dramas are so full of allusions to the game that they read like excerpts from the sporting page of a big daily. Here are a few typical examples:

"The play's the thing, wherein I'll catch."
"He that comes safe home will stand atiptoe."
"Score me up."
"Play out the play."
"Pitch ball."
"Strike, boys, and take your turn."
"Three hits."
"Strike one."
"Where go you with bats and clubs?"
"He could not miss it."
"Well, in that hit you miss."
"He shall not exceed three hits."
"Masks for face and noses."
"You shall play it in a mask."

The early use of rain-checks is indicated by a significant line:

"Rain, the game is up."

And to show how history repeats itself in its immemorial way, we find announcements of the "Pirates," "Senators," "Tigers," "Millers," "Indians," "Giants," "Blues," and so on. Shakespeare was evidently a baseballist in all that the word implies.

Thus far, no mention has been made of a cipher, and it was hoped that there would be no occasion to say anything about it, unless in connection with the score; but a fresh discovery makes a brief notice imperative. The advocates of fair play, including the loyal thousands who are old-fashioned enough to believe that Shakespeare wrote his own plays, will be glad to know that the secret, so long hidden, is now about to be unveiled, the truth as to authorship made plain, and the controversy closed to the gratification of everybody.

In "King Henry IV," first part, second act, first scene, may be found, although camouflaged, an indignant protest, the outcome of outraged feelings long pent up, indicating beyond peradventure that patience had ceased to be a virtue with William Shakespeare. Here it is—"Can you not read it? Is it not fair writ?"

"Bacon be hanged! All gammon! I know a trick worth two of that."

I trust that this astonishing disclosure will start a big stampede for the Shakespeare tent. It gives us the poet's own opinion on the cipher fad, and who else could denounce it with such undeniable authority? If the Baconians will now retire into innocuous desuetude, all true lovers of Shakespeare may well exclaim:

"For this relief much thanks!"

Phil Burt's Arsenic Afternoon

BY JIM EGAN

Illustrated by Irma Deremeaux

THE way of the transgressor is arsenic, especially if he transgresseth with a typewriter.

Yea, Bonaparte! You've said something, let me tell you.

Kidding people is my business. Sometimes they seem to like it, and sometimes—well, no man can please everybody. At all events, it enables me to keep the wolf and his bill-collecting brethren off the front porch. That's something.

If you've ever turned to the sport page of the *Morning Rave* my stuff has probably attacked your optics. Each day, excepting Sunday, there's a column running down the left-hand side which is headed:

"I'll Say So."

Right under, in smaller type, is the tidings:

"By Phil Burt."

Uhuh! I'm Phil. I'm the guy who dashes off the bright little remarks like these:

Cinnamons made six errors in game yesterday. They showed perfect teamwork in fumbling.

Mike Goopis, the new outfielder, looks like big-league timber. Between the cars.

Ty Cobb is still hitting them harder than a railway doughnut tastes.

Fine feathers make fine birds, but they don't improve a bowl of soup much.

LESS GO!

Three teams in this league seem to be afraid of cyclones. They are always dropping in the cellar.

Doubtless you recognize it. That's the kind of bunk I exhale daily. A few people think it funny. Luckily, one of them happens to be the bird who owns the *Morning Rave*.

During the baseball season I use up most of my space kidding along the warriors of the diamond. You can always find some poor bullet to pick on regularly, and he generally takes it like Austria did the peace terms.

But last season I ran up against another brand of individual. Jake McClain, left-fielder for the Cinnamons, and reputed one of the best gardeners in the big time, got off to a miserable start. He muffed easy hoists, breezed in the pinches, and stumbled around on the bags like he was ivory from the collar skyward.

Quite naturally, Jake became the bacon for professional kidders, and I guess I featured him a little stronger than the rest. It was a bit rough on McClain, but I never figured he would make a squawk; so I was surprised to find him waiting at the office for me one July morning, his face all twisted into scowls. In one hand he held a copy of the paper.

"Why, good morning, Jake!" I remarked, trying to seem happy and pleasant, as if he were bringing me a birthday present or something.

"Say, what's the idea of you bawlin' me out all the time?" he demanded, with one of those cheerful, I'd-like-to-knock-you-for-a-goal expressions.

"Bawling you out?" I asked, affecting an air of childish innocence.

"That's what I said!" he responded. "Didn't you write this?"

He shoved the sport page under my nose, indicating with a large and knotty forefinger the following observation:

If the Cinnamons only had nine Jake McClains on the team, opposing heavers could always pitch no-hit games.

The large and knotty forefinger then searched out another paragraph:

Only birds who make more errors than Jake McClain are the bullets who are trying to run Russia.

I looked at the irate outfielder.

"Well?" I uttered. A wonderful word in times of stress. It's so non-committal.

"I'm gettin' sick of this!" stormed the ball-player. "You gotta quit ridin' me—

I ain't no mustang. No wonder I boot a few, with all you sorghum-brained newspaper guys shootin' it into me!"

"I'm sorry, McClain, if you're offended," I apologized. "I was only kidding you a little—"

"A little?" he interrupted. "Say, you've panned me until I feel like the Kaiser. I tell you it's the nuts!"

Then I, who should have been pouring linseed upon the troubled waters, had to go and sink my hoof in it.

"Of course," I said, "you'll have to admit your work hasn't been the best in the world, McClain. You really have played some awfully rotten baseball."

"Rotten baseball!" he howled. "A lot you know about baseball—you or any other guy that sits around in an armchair doin' all your hittin' on a defenseless typewriter! Why, if it wasn't for the score-boards, some of you birds wouldn't know that nine innin's made up a ball-game!"

I attempted one of those tolerant and superior smiles.

"You're making another boot, McClain," I declared. "In so far as I'm concerned, I think I can safely say I understand baseball well enough to tell the good from the bad. I played a little some years ago, and—well, I hardly believe you can tell me anything about the game."

"Oh, you're a smart guy, all right!" sneered McClain. "You sport writers claim to know so much, it's a wonder Rockefeller ever had sense enough to make a dollar. It don't seem that there could be any brains left over. But when you tell me you know anything about the game of baseball, I say you don't!"

"Now, McClain—" I began.

"Now nothing!" he retorted. "How would you like to be in my shoes? How would you like to stand for the pannin' I get? Ever look at it that way? I'll tell you what I'll do. I have five hundred berries in the bank, and I'll bet I can trade places with you and do a better job than you can. Now, what do you think of that, Mr. Wise Guy?"

"YOU MUST 'A' MADE A HIT," SAID THE YOUTH.
"A SWELL-LOOKIN' JANE TOLD ME TO GIVE YOU THIS"

"Oh, that's ridiculous!" I laughed. "I am not a ball-player."

"And I ain't a writer, either," he flashed; "but I've had enough schoolin' to put words together, and I can do it for one day, I guess. Did you ever play ball? Didn't I understand you to say you played a little once upon a time?"

"But I am not a professional ball-player—"

"Am I any professional writer? Huh? I'm takin' as much of a chance as you are. I'm bettin' I can do your work better for one day than you can do mine. Now, what do you say?"

"Our lines of endeavor are not at all alike," I said weakly. "Your idea is so foolish that—"

"Foolish nothin'!" he sneered. "You're not game. You're as yellow as a duck's foot!"

That was the final wisp of hay which crippled the ship of the desert.

"That 'll be enough from you, you fumble-fingered busher!" I snapped. "I won't have any prune leaguer pulling the stuff you're trying to get away with in this office. I'll show you where to get off by taking you up. Thought you could bluff me, did you? I'll trade places with you any old day in the week, and you'll look more like a dub than you do now, if it's possible!"

Pretty wild collection of language to hurl at any one, but I was madder than the famous rabbit of early spring. Jake McClain was fully as peeved, and we almost set fire to the office agreeing to the details of the wager.

II

When it was all settled, Jake was to take my place in the office the following Wednesday, and I was to officiate as the regular outfielder of the Cinnamons that same afternoon, provided the consent of all interested parties could be gained.

"It can be fixed up all right," McClain remarked in answer to my objections. "Old Bill Pratt will stretch a point to favor a stunt for the paper, and this is how the thing will look. Besides, we haven't a regular league game that day. We tackle the Trench Diggers from the other circuit in an exhibition game for the benefit of the convalescent soldiers here."

Not to dwell too long upon the harrowing details, let me observe that Bill Pratt, of the Cinnamons, agreed to use me as his left-fielder in the exhibition contest, and I, of course, was able to appoint Jake McClain manager of the *Rave's* "nut column" for a day.

When I cooled down a bit, I would have given an old-fashioned wine cellar to back out of the mess, for I could see my finish. It would be an exhibition game, all right, and I would be the terrible exhibition. Jake McClain would also fizzle as a "funny man"; but his disgrace would be as nothing to my public humiliation.

Thus I figured—and can you blame me? As for the five hundred fish, I scarcely thought of that.

The first sensible thing I did after getting into this miserable wager was to dash out to Marion's house. In addition to being the prettiest girl between the Pacific and the Atlantic, Marion was a past noble grand among baseball "bugs," and had a head as full of ideas as a salesman of wildcat oil stock; only hers weren't the same kind of ideas.

"Of all the reckless youths, Jack!" she exclaimed after I had elucidated my folly. You see my name is Phil Burt during working hours only.

"Somebody ought to feature me in a head-butting contest against a nice, soft brick wall!" I yodeled bitterly. "Little Bobby Boob from Boobville—that's me! I have certainly pulled a prize boner this time!"

Marion patted me soothingly on the cheek.

"Is it the Trench Diggers you have to play against?" she queried. "Why, that's Uncle Fred's club!"

"Don't I know it?" I said. "He'll kid me to death! This will be a great chance for him to get a few laughs at my expense. Oh, boy!"

"No, he won't, Jackie!" Marion declared. "I'll make him be nice to you. Uncle Fred is fond of me, and will do anything I ask."

"You had better leave well enough in a similar condition," I said. "He'd enjoy hearing me squawk. And wouldn't McClain? I'll say so. Yea, Bonaparte!"

"Cheer up—you aren't licked yet," insisted Marion. "You have nearly a week before the game. You can practise hard and be prepared in a kind of fashion, anyway. And I'll be there, rooting for you, just like the pretty girls in all the baseball

stories, and you'll make a pinch hit or a star catch, and be a hero."

"Yes, I will—not!" I remarked. "You forget I am going to be playing this game—not writing it. I know it 'll be arsenic. You've said it."

"Don't talk like Phil Burt. It's bad enough to have to read it," declared my girl. "You may be lucky—who knows? Perhaps I can pick up a four-leaf clover or a rabbit's foot somewhere for you.

"WHO TOLD YOU YOU COULD PLAY BALL?" CRIED THE BLEACHER CRITICS

And, anyway, Jack, I'm for you — win, lose, or draw!"

III

THAT fatal Wednesday arrived all too soon. Of course, the thing leaked out. My fellow scribes chortled with glee when they heard of it, and just smeared me with publicity. They even tried to get me to pose for photographs, and I nearly committed murder from seven to ten times daily. No chance for me to do the shrinking violet stuff—I was getting to be as well-known as Snoozermoor mattresses or Shaker Oats.

A nice, large crowd turned out for the exhibition between the Trench Diggers and the Cinnamons. Marion was there, and Jake McClain himself was on hand—in the press-box. He had done his stuff for the morning edition and was prepared to gloat over my downfall. I never saw a fellow look so villainously happy.

Marion's Uncle Fred, the manager of our opponents, came over to the dugout to see me. I was trying to hide behind the water-cooler, as nervous in my ball-togs as an actor on an opening night.

"Aha! Phil Burt, the famed writer and athlete!" sang out the pilot of the Trench Diggers. "I hear Ty Cobb and Joe Jackson are worrying over their jobs and have protested against your playing. Don't be too hard on us to-day, Jack—I mean Phil—"

"Cut the kidding!" I entreated. "I feel as utterly lost as an ex-bartender!"

"Well," Uncle Fred remarked slowly, "I thought you might like to know that Hooks Benton is going to heave for us this joyous P.M. He waves a pretty mean elbow, too."

Did Hooks Benton wave a mean elbow? Yea, Bonaparte! Once more you've squawked something!

And that wasn't all. Hooks was one of the most eccentric mound mechanics who ever smoked over a fast one, and had provided rare copy for the sport page humorists—including Phil Burt, of course. So much stuff had been written around his peculiarities and so much fun poked at him that the famous southpaw was off newspapermen for life.

I could imagine how kindly disposed Benton would feel toward me—toward the humorous Phil Burt, who often had observed that "Hooks was a fork-hander from the shoulder up and out," and passed out other similar pleasantries.

"So Hooks is going to pitch?" I said, about as brightly as a starving child which has just lost its place in the bread-line.

"Uhuh!" responded dear Uncle Fred. "He says he feels great to-day, too."

"Aw, run back to your kennel and kid the bushers," yodled old Bill Pratt, entering the dugout. "I guess Hooks Benton is nothing in our irreproachable lives. He may shake a nasty flipper in your circuit, but real ball-players ain't goin' to be bothered none. Hey, Burt?"

I smiled feebly, and Uncle Fred strolled away with a grin as wide as an airplane's wings.

I refused to indulge in any practise, and Pratt allowed me to skulk in the pit. Time enough for me to make an ass of myself when the umpire started hostilities.

While I was moping in the concrete shelter and the other boys were nailing grounders and flies with nonchalant abandon, one of the bat boys brought me a folded note.

"Gee, you must 'a' made a hit!" he said, with the free speech of youth. "A swell-lookin' jane told me to give you this. Oh, baby! Some kid!"

The message was from loyal little Marion. It read thus:

DEAR JACK:

I want you to do your best. Just like all the silly heroines in the stories, I'm writing this on the eve of battle to cheer you. Try to feel lucky. I could not find any rabbit's foot, but I have a four-leaf clover in each shoe, and I am going to bring you all the luck I can. Yours, for over the top.

MARION.

"Lucky?" I murmured to myself. "The luckiest thing that could happen to me right now would be a stroke of apoplexy, or appendicitis, or something like that."

Three o'clock—the hour of doom—came all too quickly. The Trench Diggers were at bat, and the Cinnamons took the field.

Never will I be able to set down in unemotional type the sensations I experienced as I sneaked out to my position in left field. I was not far from the bleachers, and I'll never forget the volume of sound poured upon me. I wanted to sink straight down into the soil.

Luckily nobody hit into my territory the first stanza, and I got back to the dugout without accident.

"Great work, Phil!" solemnly observed Josh Twain, third-sacker for the Cinnamons and one of baseball's immortal cut-ups. "You are playing errorless ball out there. At that, I'll bet as a fielder you are a wonderful writer."

In the second canto one of the Trench Diggers crashed a blow out into my neighborhood. I managed to reach it as it was bounding along the ground and throw it back to the infield. The batsman was held to three bases on what was probably a clean single.

But in the third inning came disaster. Some infernal scoundrel hoisted a high one out my way. I had to get under it—there was no escape. I was trembling like a leaf, and my hands seemed full of thumbs. I accomplished one of the most perfect muffs in the history of baseball, and the runner reached second on an easy out. If the center-fielder hadn't dashed over and shot the pill in he would probably have gone all the way around.

How the bleacher critics ripped me with their machine-gun fusillade:

"Give the guy some glue!"

"Who told you you could play ball?"

"Get the hook!"

"You big dub!"

"Where did they draft you from—Switzerland? You cheese!"

"Why don't you carry a basket?"

Yea, Bonaparte, I was glad when that inning came to an end; but it wasn't a great deal better in the pit.

"You're sure a great ball-player!" snarled Crab Wise, the veteran first baseman. "They oughta scratch your name out of the family Bible!"

"Why can't you be as funny in the paper as you are in the field?" uttered Josh Twain, with mock reproach. "You don't

write as well as George Ade, but you play ball better than Charlie Chaplin. At least, you give me a bigger laugh."

"You must be a brother of that bird Ring Lardner tells about," growled Seitz, the disgruntled Cinnamon pitcher.

Blaine, the catcher, succumbed on a long lift to right.

"Mr. Burt, you are next up," said Bill Pratt.

In my excitement I had forgotten I was batting after the catcher—in eighth place. I grabbed a bat and faced Hooks Benton for the first time, while Josh Twain danced out on the first-base coaching-line.

"Oh, here is the funny man, eh?" said the famous left-hander, with a wicked grin.

He drove one at my head, and I floundered in the dust.

"Oh, woodman, spare that tree!" I heard Josh Twain entreat as I regained my feet.

Before I could make up my mind what to do, Benton had buzzed over two strikes.

"Take that gun off your shoulder, boy!" yelled Twain. "The enemy is coming."

Hooks let fly another twister, and I swung about ten seconds after the ball had plunked in the catcher's glove.

"You're out!" sighed the umpire, and I slunk toward the pit.

"You don't need to carry a cue out there," remarked Crab Wise. "They should mark you out every time it's your turn to bat, and save all this trouble."

"Cheer up," said Bill Pratt. "It was just my mistake in havin' you bat in eighth place. I shoul have put you down about twelfth or thirteenth."

The fans added a fine quota of hoots and catcalls as I chased out on the field the next inning, and for the first time I began to feel really sore.

"You big dub!" I whispered to myself. "You are letting them knock you for a row of goals without a protest. You'll have to buck up, or Jake McClain will have the merry chortle on you, all right!"

So I gritted my teeth and determined to do things. The game rolled along until the ninth frame, however, and I had done nothing. No more chances had come my way in left, and in two more times at bat I had scratched out on weak infield balls.

The Trench Diggers were having no more trouble with the Cinnamons than a bunch of marines with a gang of Heinies, anyway. When our opponents went to bat in the first half of the ninth, the score was ten to three in their favor. Our pitcher struck out two men and then filled the cushions. More runs seemed imminent.

The next batter smashed the first ball pitched toward the left-field bleachers. I started to run blindly back, without a thought of getting near the flying sphere.

My gloved hand was thrust wildly up into the air. I suddenly heard something plunk against the leather—and it stuck there! My foot hit something, and I stumbled down in a heap; but the agate nestled securely in my mitted hand.

The bleacher bugs were on their feet, howling again. This time it was sweet words of praise and commendation I received, and for the first time that afternoon I felt good.

"Great catch, boy!" Old Bill Pratt assured me as I tripped into the dugout.

"I'll say so!" added Josh Twain, with a wink for me; and even Crab Wise tried to seem human.

Nobody expected us to make seven runs in our half of the ninth, but Bill Pratt talked as if making a flock of runs was as easy as being short-changed at the ticket-office.

Wise started the inning by striking out, but Twain landed on Hooks Benton for a solid two-base clout. This seemed to rattle the southpaw a bit, for he passed the next two birds, thereby stuffing the burlaps. Catcher McAdoo was up, and I followed.

Hooks Benton took his time with Mac, and our peerless backstop clicked the ozone three times.

Two out, and I was up to bat—with the bases full!

It was a regular story-book situation, and I yearned to make a hit. I felt I would donate my right eye for a blow that would clean the bags.

A round of cheers greeted me for my lucky catch as I stepped up to the obloid, cue in hand. Hooks Benton grinned.

"The press-box wonder, eh?" he sallied. "Well, le's see you go!"

The first strike was called on me, but I fouled the second.

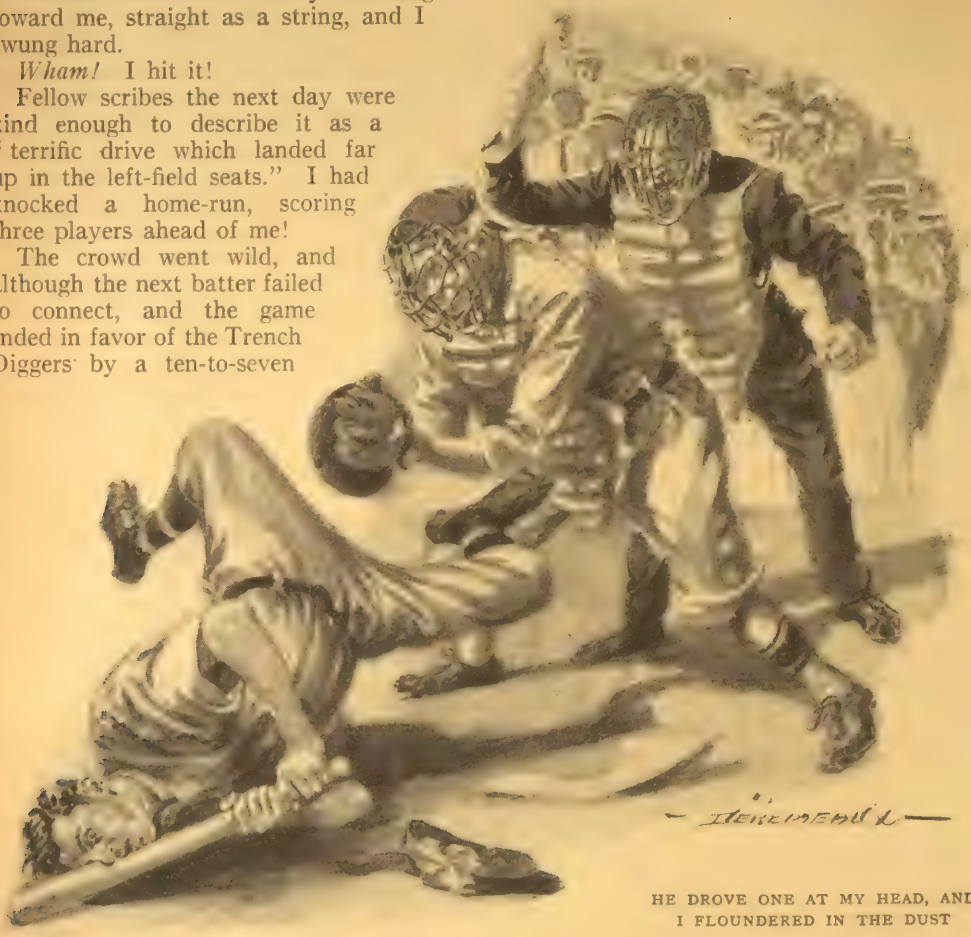
Uncle Fred came out of the Trench Diggers' pit and yelped something about the ball. After a bit of argument with the umpire, during which time he had hold of the ball, he handed the pellet back, and Benton prepared to whiz another down the alley.

I could see the old cherry whistling toward me, straight as a string, and I swung hard.

Wham! I hit it!

Fellow scribes the next day were kind enough to describe it as a "terrific drive which landed far up in the left-field seats." I had knocked a home-run, scoring three players ahead of me!

The crowd went wild, and although the next batter failed to connect, and the game ended in favor of the Trench Diggers by a ten-to-seven score, the luster of my glory was not dimmed.



HE DROVE ONE AT MY HEAD, AND I FLOUNDERED IN THE DUST

Congratulations were poured upon me like old shoes upon a bridegroom, and even Jake McClain glad-handed me.

"You win!" he whispered. "I was wrong. You can kid me all the rest of your life if you wanta, and I'll never make a bleat!"

IV

As proud and happy as a millionaire who has had a new orphan asylum named after him, I called upon Marion that evening. It didn't spoil my pleasure a bit, either, to see that Uncle Fred, pilot of the Trench Diggers, was a visitor.

"The conquering hero comes!" Marion called brightly. "Make yourself at home, you mighty Babe Ruth of the press!"

"I guess I hit that one, all right," I observed, trying to be modest and not succeeding. "Jake McClain could hardly believe it was true. He admitted I had won the wager without question."

"Are you going to collect from him?" Marion asked.

"I guess so—why not?" I said.

"Was his stuff terribly bad, then?" she queried. "Or have you seen it?"

"I saw a proof," I responded. "Junk stuff, but passable, all things considered. But I showed him up, didn't I? No regular ball-player could have done any better, seems to me."

Marion looked at Uncle Fred and sighed.

"He's swelling up, just like a man!" she uttered. "I'm afraid we'll have to tell him before he thinks himself a second Benny Kauff."

"Have to tell me what?" I demanded. "What's up?"

"As a ball-player, Jack," declared Uncle Fred, "you are the wittiest of paragraphers. You were lucky this afternoon, you know; it wouldn't happen again in a thousand years."

"Oh, I don't know," I demurred. "I had some luck, of course. Still, I was packing no rabbit's foot—"

"No," interrupted Uncle Fred, "but you had a rabbit."

"A rabbit?" I said. "What do you mean?"

"A rabbit," replied Uncle Fred, "is what Iron Man McGinnity used to call a solid rubber ball with a regulation leather cover on it. Sneak one into a game, and a batter can hit it a mile. Unless it bounced, no one would be the wiser, either. Usually an umpire can't be fooled by this old trick, but to-day I bunked Frank McRay and switched a rabbit for the regular ball during that ninth-inning argument. It was a rabbit that Hooks Benton threw you for the last strike, and he eased it straight over so you couldn't help hitting it. No wonder you knocked a home-run. Anybody can put a rabbit into the bleachers."

I seemed to feel myself slipping.

"So?" I remarked stupidly. "Why did you do all this?"

Uncle Fred glanced at Marion. She looked up at me with a touch of mischief in her eye.

"I was trying to bring you luck, Jackie," she said. "So I persuaded stubborn old uncle to help you, if the chance came, in order that you might not be mortified before all the world. The old dear finally gave in, and replaced my rabbit's foot with his rabbit. I think it was really nice of him."

She wasted a splendid hug on the "old dear."

"Not strictly good baseball," confessed Uncle Fred, "but I would do a lot for Marion—even to helping a nut writer. We were so far ahead those four runs didn't hurt us, anyhow."

"Well," I said sheepishly, "I guess I am not such a baseball wonder, after all. I'll be square with Jake McClain and call off the bet. Leave things a tie. No more diamond glory for Phil Burt! I'll stick to kidding people from this time forth."

"Now, Jack," Marion smiled, "as Phil Burt might observe, 'you've squawked something.' Sit down by me, and let's forget baseball."

"Yea, Bonaparte!" I agreed, benching myself as per orders. "But, do you remember that catch I made in the first of the ninth? I'll bet Jake McClain himself couldn't—"

THE LITTLE FLOWERS

"Some one must love the little flowers
That no one cares to gather—
The little nameless things half seen,
Sprinkled through the meadows green,
No less dear to God the Father,
Though they deck not halls nor bowers,
Nor garden closes—
Some one must love the little flowers."

So my lady speaks to me—
Soul of gentleness is she—
As I bring her mighty roses,
Heavy-lidded, golden, sleepy;
Orchids serpentine and creepy,
Gouts of blood on pallor painted;
Lilied cups of carven pearl,
Lovely as some scarce-budded girl,
Altar-still and strange and sainted.

As I sing their splendid praises,
Down she takes her Book of Hours,
Quaint illumined all with daisies—
"Some one must love the little flowers."

Richard Le Gallienne

The Odd Measure

Proposed Memorials of Theodore Roosevelt

A Park at Oyster Bay and a Monument in Washington

THE Roosevelt Memorial Association has chosen the week of October 20-27 in which to conduct its nation-wide campaign for a fund of five million dollars with which to establish worthy memorials of the great American who died on the 6th of January last. William Howard Taft and Charles E. Hughes are honorary presidents of the association, the president being William Boyce Thompson, and the treasurer Albert H. Wiggin. Subscriptions to the fund can be made through the local campaign organizations, or by sending a check directly to Mr. Wiggin, at the association's headquarters, 1 Madison Avenue, New York.

With the money thus raised it is proposed to acquire, develop, and maintain a park in the town of Oyster Bay, on Long Island, and to erect a monumental memorial of adequate nature in Washington. It is expected that the park in Oyster Bay will ultimately include Colonel Roosevelt's home, Sagamore Hill, to be preserved as Mount Vernon and Abraham Lincoln's home at Springfield, Illinois, have been preserved.

Theodore Roosevelt was born October 27, 1858. If this October 27 brings a keener sense of loss to the millions who loved him, it is to be hoped that the day, marking the close of the memorial campaign, will be remembered as one in which the nation responded joyfully to the opportunity to pay him a tribute of honor and to keep before future generations the memory of his splendid Americanism and glowing ideals of service.

* * * * *

The French Parliamentary Election in October

The First Electoral Battle Since the War-Time Truce of Parties

AFTER five strenuous years of waging war and making peace, France is once more preparing for a parliamentary election. The opening of the official electoral period is announced for October 12, and three weeks later the voters will pronounce their verdict upon fifteen hundred to two thousand candidates, and will show which political party has come out of the war with the greatest honors.

To Americans, some of the French party names are very confusing, as in other countries the same names cover very different principles. The Independent Socialists of France, for example, are exactly on the opposite side of socialism to those of Germany. While the German Independents are the reddest of the reds and the most uncompromising, the French are so moderate, so pale in color, that the true socialists refuse to recognize them as anything more than misguided and very distant relations.

And the Radical party of France! It is in the position of a good dog maligned by the American press and public alike because its name has a bad sound in our ears. We are used to having Bolsheviki, I. W. W.'s and the like called radicals, and thus have fallen into the error of believing the French Radicals to be of the same kind. Nothing could be less true.

The full name of the party is "Parti Républicain Radical et Radical-Socialiste," but it is neither radical in our political usage nor socialist in the socialists' sense, and its flag is not red, but red, white, and blue.

It called itself radical because, being founded in the early years of the Third Republic, its aim was to make radical changes in the social conditions carried over from the Empire; to strike a fairer balance between capital and labor; to obtain legislation that would protect the working man against undue exploitation, avoidable accidents, and unwholesome working conditions, and that would provide for sickness and old age by means of government pensions. It favored syndicalism in the original sense—that of the Samuel Gompers kind—and condemned the principles of the I. W. W.

For many years the party's name was simply "Républicain Radical." Then it was found advisable to open its doors to people who, while fully subscribing to its statutes, wished to call themselves "socialists" with a difference, using the word in the sentimental sense only, and being as stanchly opposed to giving France over to an experiment in Marxism as to recalling the Bourbons to the throne. In deference to the wishes of these people, the words "et Radical-Socialiste" were added to the party's name, but at every annual congress the question has been agitated of retaining or removing them.

Georges Clémenceau is a radical. He is not a member of the Radical party, however, for he has always refused to join any political organization whatever; but the party itself was founded on principles laid down by him, in the reconstruction days of the seventies, and though he has savagely attacked several members of it, the party itself and what it stands for have his approval and support.

* * * * *

A Brief Guide to the French Political Parties

From the Extreme Socialists to the Small Surviving Coterie of Monarchists

WHEN you look upon the Chamber of Deputies from the place of its presiding officer—for many years M. Paul Deschanel has held that position—you have before you a semicircular amphitheater rising to the surrounding galleries. In this wide well the deputies group themselves according to parties and wings of parties.

At the extreme left sit the Unified Socialists, those spiritual descendants of Karl Marx who are pledged to the "socialization of all means of production and exchange"—that is, to communism or collectivism. They are forbidden by their statutes to sanction the existence of a bourgeois or non-Marxian government by joining it in a ministerial capacity. Their aim is to hasten the advent of social revolution and internationalism, and they favor direct action, sabotage, and such other fine methods of destruction as Lenine and Trotzky are trying out on unfortunate Russia.

Next to them come the Independent Socialists, those unorthodox Marxians who stand ready for compromise, political, social, and otherwise, even to the point of accepting, as Aristide Briand did, a bourgeois portfolio and the bourgeois remuneration that goes with it.

Then come the Radical Socialists and the Radicals, who, between them, have held for many years past the predominant number of votes in the chamber. Marxism on one side and clericalism on the other are their enemies. However, when "reaction" is the stronger of the two in an electoral district, they have frequently allied themselves temporarily with the Independent Socialists in order to snatch a brand from Rome, feeling small fear of the triumph of pure Marxism in France. The Radicals recruit most of their votes from the trading classes, the peasant landowners, and the liberal professions—people who have a property stake in the country, or who can see the signs of the times, and who realize that the old order is dead and that something like Bolshevism can be avoided only by a liberal recognition of the human and economic rights and aspirations of labor, justly proportioned to those of capital.

Between the Radicals and their neighbors to the right, the so-called Progressists, an invisible line is drawn, separating the left from the right—even though the line runs far beyond the center of the amphitheater. The Progressists represent "big business," protectionism, and class consciousness—the latter in the same sense in which the Unified Socialists represent it on the other side of the fence. The veteran Alexandre Ribot is their distinguished party leader.

Further on sit the Nationalists, with Maurice Barrès, the author, at their head. This is the party which labored for a more adequate military system, and which kept alive in France the idea of *la revanche* and the hope for the return of Alsace and Lorraine. Its platform was not popular in the

lulled years preceding the great war, but how remarkably it has since been vindicated!

There is no distinct clerical party in France, as there is in Germany, but clericalism spreads more or less all over the right. Its fastness, however, is the extreme right, where monarchists of both branches—the Royalists and the Imperialists—are represented. It is a small group, and most of its members have reconciled themselves to the republican régime. Count Albert de Mun, the scholar, statesman, and orator, whose death, late in 1914, all France deplored, was a Royalist of this stamp, and showed himself splendidly loyal to France, republic or no, when the war began.

There have been and there will be temporary combinations of French parties for purposes of passing or defeating certain definite measures. The Bloc Républicain was formed to put through the Associations Law and the law separating church and state. The Alliance Démocratique served its purpose at the spring elections of 1914 by sustaining the bill for three years' military service, which helped much to save France from the first furious onslaught. But none of these combinations endure, because they are entered into with a single end in view. The parties alone live on, because they rest upon a basis of general principles and work toward many distinct goals in all branches of the nation's life.

* * * * *

The Unaccountable Politics of Spain

The Monarchists Have a Majority, But Crises Are Frequent

ACROSS the Pyrenees, where Napoleon said the East began, the political parties make up an even more complicated puzzle-picture than they do in France. In the latter country, principles and ideas control party divisions, while in less literate Spain politics seem to depend chiefly on the voter's temperament and the state of his larder. Observers agree that Spaniards are politically unaccountable, and that the only thing it is safe to depend on is another "crisis." There have been more than a hundred crises since King Alfonso's accession to the throne, and under the circumstances the wonder is that he is still there.

Of Spanish parties, properly speaking, there are only a few, but of party groups there were by latest count fifteen. The right, or conservative side of the Cortes, is composed of Conservatives and Liberals, both downright monarchists; but the Spaniards have found three different ways of interpreting each of these party names, so that there are really six monarchist groups, each swearing by its own leader against all comers.

The present premier, Dato, leads his followers against those of Ex-Premier Maura and those of La Cierva, who has not as yet achieved that highest ministerial rank. Count Romanones, who has also been premier, heads his group of Liberals in rivalry with two other divisions led by Santiago Alva and Garcia Prieto. Between the six of them, they control three-quarters of the four hundred votes in the Cortes.

Between the right and the left are the Regionalists and the Reformists. The latter, under the leadership of Alvarez, are opportunists, caring more for reforms in the government than for monarchical or republican principles. The Regionalists, diversely guided by Cambo, Ventosa, and Rodés, are working for provincial autonomy, particularly in Catalonia and the north of Spain. A Spanish visitor here said of them the other day:

"They are a bit troublesome, but not dangerous."

The left is formed by two Republican and three Socialist factions, who wield an influence quite out of proportion to the number of votes they control in the Cortes. Domingo, one of the Republican leaders, was the first speaker in the Cortes to suggest King Alfonso's abdication last October. His rival, Lerroux, nearly succeeded in having a republic proclaimed in Barcelona two summers ago, after the king had dissolved the Cortes—nearly, but not quite, for at the right moment Lerroux was absent in France.

The Socialists, variously led by Iglenaz, an aged invalid; Besteiro, a university professor, and Prieto, a labor agitator, take of socialism what they like and leave the rest.

Don Alfonso has a hard row to hoe, but he hoes it so well that even the Republicans wish he would proclaim a republic and be its first president.

* * * * *

The Strange People of the Claddagh

A Wild Corner of Ireland in Which the Transatlantic Fliers Landed

IT is probable that very few Americans had ever heard of the Claddagh, or knew what a Claddagh ring is, when they read that Captain Alcock and Lieutenant Brown, after their daring flight across the Atlantic, had been presented with two of those curious gold ornaments that are so highly prized by the strange people who inhabit a wild corner of Ireland near the airmen's landing-place.

The Claddagh is a straggling settlement across the river Corrib from the old seaport town of Galway. Its inhabitants are a dark-haired, dark-skinned people who are popularly believed to be of Spanish blood. This theory of their origin is supported by the historical fact that Galway long carried on an active trade with Spain; but ethnologists regard it as more probable that they are a remnant of the prehistoric Irish race of Firbolgs, who were driven to rocky seashores and mountain fastnesses by the invasion of the taller and lighter Milesians. Their settlement on the Corrib seems to have existed since the dawn of history, and traces of their primitive stone dwellings down at the water's edge are to be seen to this day.

The present Claddagh village is a huddle of thatched houses with a population of about fifteen hundred. The men live by fishing—mackerel, mostly—in their open boats, and the women carry the catch to the market in flat baskets, which they poise on their heads. The dress of the women is extremely picturesque, and is worn with graceful dignity—a bright petticoat woven at the loom and dyed with madder or indigo, a cloak worn like the Spanish *mantilla,* and a hood or kerchief draped around the head. They seldom intermarry with strangers, but of late the steam trawlers that sweep the wider Atlantic have called away their young men to adventure outside Galway Bay, and many never return.

For a long time they chose their own king, and even to-day the older men govern and the old customs are maintained. Gold ornaments of rare design are part of the inheritance of their dim Celtic past, and it was a happy thought to commemorate the landing of the two air adventurers on this lonely spot by presenting them with specimens of the Claddagh ring.

* * * * *

Lord Rayleigh, Discoverer of Argon

The Recent Death of a Great Student of Nature

THE death of that eminent physicist, Lord Rayleigh, recalls the interest aroused, twenty-five years ago, by the announcement that he had discovered a new gas in the atmosphere, thus upsetting the long-established idea that the air we breathe was a mixture of nitrogen, hydrogen, and oxygen.

In 1888, when he was a professor at the Royal Institution in London, Rayleigh began to investigate the physical properties of gases, including their specific gravities. When he came to nitrogen, he found marked divergencies in his results according as he procured the nitrogen by removing all other known constituents from the air, or by chemically decomposing some nitrogenous compound, such as ammonia. He found the chemical nitrogen to be perceptibly lighter.

He then recalled that a similar observation had been recorded a century earlier, but had never been pursued. He invited Professor Ramsay, an expert chemist, to help him; and in 1894, as a result of their labors, the world was informed that the lower levels of the atmosphere contain a previously unknown constituent to the amount of about one per cent—a gas which differs from nitrogen in density and spectrum, and which is absolutely

inert, refusing to enter into any chemical combination. For this reason its discoverers named it "argon," a Greek word meaning "workless."

Lord Rayleigh was seventy-seven when he died a few weeks ago. At the age of twenty he was senior wrangler at Cambridge, and for several years he held the chair of experimental physics there. Every-day happenings fascinated him—the ripple-marks on the sands of the sea floor; the oscillations of bells; pin-hole images; shadows of light and sound; the effect of winds on the draft of chimneys. Papers on these and other common phenomena of nature are to be found among his works, which fill five thick quarto volumes.

* * * * *

Did the British Admiralty Decline to Use Burning-Glasses?

A "Revelation" of an Alleged Secret of the War

A RECENT magazine article, signed by a writer of some authority on naval subjects, purported to reveal a war-time secret which, hostilities having ended, might safely be disclosed. It went on to describe what was rather sensationally termed "a fiendish war device, hurling flames and death a mile, which the British Admiralty declined to use" against the Germans.

The device, it appeared, was that of burning-glasses powerful enough to cause fires and explosions in enemy war-ships at long range. The secret of this terrible invention, the reader was informed, had been "jealously guarded in the vaults of the Admiralty for more than a hundred years," having been originally suggested by Admiral Lord Dundonald. Its use against the German navy was repeatedly urged upon the authorities during the world war, but "to the everlasting credit of the Anglo-Saxon race" it was rejected as "too horrible for humanity."

It is to be feared that this story is a little mixed. We leave naval experts to decide whether burning-glasses—a device used by Archimedes in the third century B.C.—would be likely to prove an effective weapon in modern warfare, and whether a mirror, or series of mirrors, large enough to start fires and explosions a mile away would not be an easy target for hostile guns. We also pass by the question why it should be any more "horrible" to destroy an enemy vessel with rays from a mirror than with shells from heavy guns, which latter the British navy, and all the combatant navies, used for that purpose whenever they had an opportunity. Apart from these issues, however, it is abundantly on record that the device suggested to the Admiralty in 1812 by the tenth Earl of Dundonald—better known by his earlier title of Lord Cochrane—was not that of burning-glasses.

* * * * *

Lord Cochrane's "Horrible" War Device

It Was a Curious Anticipation of Poison-Gas Warfare

AS a matter of fact, Lord Cochrane's scheme was a curious anticipation of the use of poisonous gases in warfare, for the introduction of which the Germans may claim undisputed credit, or discredit. He proposed to suffocate the enemy on a wholesale scale by heating a quantity of sulfur and letting the fumes drift down upon the hostile ships or fortifications when the wind was in the right direction. A British naval commission, which examined the admiral's plans, did not reject them, but reported that they would be irresistible, and Lord Melville, the first lord of the Admiralty, requested him to put them into execution against Napoleon's ships at Genoa and Toulon. The attempt was postponed, however, for one reason and another, and ultimately nothing was done.

Years afterward, when Cochrane returned to England after his service in the navies of Chile and Brazil, he again laid his scheme before the Admiralty, and this time it was rejected on the ground that its use "would not accord with the feelings and principles of civilized warfare." Moreover, there is little doubt that in comparison with the recent scientific development of chemical weapons, his methods would have proved to be of very limited efficiency.

The Wild Fawn*

A WIFE WHO BROUGHT GAY PARIS TO QUIET DIXIE LAND

By Mary Imlay Taylor

Author of "Who Pays?" "Children of Passion," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. L. LAMBDIN

THE news that their son William is bringing home with him from France a girl whom he married after a short courtship is a shock to Mr. and Mrs. Carter, who, with two other sons and a daughter, live in an old-fashioned Southern town. Their lame son Daniel is especially perturbed, because he knows that William was engaged to a town girl, Virginia Denbigh.

William and his bride, Fanchon, arrive. Fanchon proves to be a young French girl who wears daring gowns and speaks English with a charming accent. She soon shocks the conservative community with her cigarette-smoking and her general disregard for Southern conventions.

Virginia Denbigh, too proud to let any one see that she is affected by the defection of her ex-fiancé, calls on Fanchon, and invites her to sing at a church concert.

At this concert Fanchon is startled by the appearance of a sinister-looking man, one Corwin, manager for a famous pianist who is on the program. She hides her dismay, however, and sings in a manner that wins loud applause. Suddenly, to the amazement of the decorous church audience, she commences to dance—strangely, wildly, as the daughter of Herodias might have danced before Herod. While some of the audience applaud wildly and others sit stupefied, Mr. Carter rushes home from the church and bellows to his son:

"You've married a dancer! Do you hear me, sir? A French ballet-dancer!"

VI

IT was an hour later when Miranda, looking very dark and showing the whites of her eyes to an alarming extent, opened the front door for Mrs. Carter, Emily, and Leigh.

"Mist' Carter says, please, ma'am, yo' come inter de libr'ry," said the colored servitress in a sympathetic undertone.

Mrs. Carter cast an apprehensive look at her daughter.

"I guess you two had better go upstairs," she whispered.

Emily nodded, and started for the staircase, but Mr. Carter shouted from the library:

"I hear you-all out there—come in here!"

They went. Leigh, having forgotten to put down Fanchon's extra wraps, brought up the rear, his flushed face just appearing above a mass of chiffon, lace, and fur.

Mr. Carter, striding up and down the room alone, caught sight of his youngest son first.

"Put down those things!" he shouted. "You look like a dromedary."

Leigh obeyed, but he straightened himself and stood, sullenly, his eyes on the ground. His father took no further notice of him.

"I'd like to know if any of you knew what that girl was going to do to-night?" he demanded fiercely.

Mrs. Carter sank weakly into the nearest chair.

"No, we didn't! Wasn't it awful? I was so mortified. The Baptist minister went out just after you, Johnson, and the rector was as red as could be. I'm sure I don't know what he thought!"

"Thought! Where is she?"

"William came for her and took her out to supper at the inn," said Emily in a weak voice.

Like Leigh she stood back, unsympathetic, but she was a little frightened, too.

"Humph! Took her out to supper, eh?" Mr. Carter thundered. "I reckon he thought he'd better! I gave him a piece of my mind."

* *Copyright, 1919, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the September number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

"SHE'S AN ANGEL! I WON'T HAVE HER ABUSED!"

"Oh, papa! He was as white as a sheet." William's mother pressed her handkerchief against her shaking lips. "He didn't know, of course. He wasn't to blame, dear—you shouldn't have done it!"

"Wasn't to blame?" Mr. Carter blazed with wrath. "Didn't he marry that ballet-dancer? Didn't he bring a French ballet-dancer home here and foist her on a decent, respectable family? He wasn't to blame, you say? By Jove, I wish he was small enough to thrash!"

He was still walking up and down. As he swung around, Leigh faced him.

"She's a lovely creature!" the boy cried passionately. "That dance was beautiful—everybody thought so!"

"Oh, Leigh!" gasped his mother. "Dr. Fanshawe was ashamed to look at it!"

"Old idiot!" cried Leigh. "You're all making her unhappy—any one can see it. Nothing but criticism from morning until night—I call it cruel!"

Mr. Carter stared at him a moment in amazed incredulity. Then he jeered.

"Hear, hear!" he cried. "Wisdom from the mouths of babes and sucklings! Do you want to marry a ballet-dancer, too, sir?"

But his son's blood was up.

"I call it a burning shame!" he cried. "She's come here, a foreigner, and she wants to love us, and you're talking brutally about her. She's exquisite, she was to-night, she—"

"Go to bed!" shouted Mr. Carter. "Shut up and go to bed!"

Mrs. Carter rose hastily and gave Leigh a little shove.

"Go!" she whispered. "There, there — don't aggravate papa."

Leigh, shaking with anger, yielded ground reluctantly.

"She's an angel!" he shouted at the door. "I won't have her abused!"

"Did you marry her?" Mr. Carter asked with fine sarcasm. "Maybe I've made a mistake; I thought it was William."

Leigh almost choked with indignation.

"He isn't here—I won't have her talked about."

"Go to bed!" thundered Mr. Carter, taking a step forward.

"I—" Leigh began to sputter again, but his mother thrust him out and shut the door.

"Do speak lower, Johnson," she sobbed. "I know Miranda listens."

"I don't care a hang whether Miranda listens or not," said Mr. Carter. "That boy's an ass — talk about his being a genius!"

"Oh, papa, he's only eighteen," said Mrs. Carter deprecatingly, "and she's made up to him from the very first."

"He's an ass!" repeated Mr. Carter. "And I guess the whole town knows I've got a ballet-dancer—"

He stopped; his eye had suddenly lighted on Emily. She was huddled in a frightened attitude behind her mother's chair, and the light was strong on her face. Her father stared.

"What's the matter with that child's eyes? he demanded suddenly. "They look like burnt holes in a blanket!"

Mrs. Carter, following his look, suddenly noticed her daughter's eyelashes and nose. In an illuminating flash she remembered that first night in Emily's room.

"Oh, Emmy!" she gasped. "You've painted your eyelashes!"

Emily clung to the back of her chair.

"I had to, mama. They're horrid and white."

"Good Lord, that minx is teaching my daughter to paint her face! Mama, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. Can't you watch your own children?" bellowed Mr. Carter, beside himself.

"Emmy, I'm ashamed!" Poor Mrs. Carter sat gasping, her mouth open. "I never dreamed—what's that on your nose?"

Emily seized her handkerchief and began to rub the offending feature.

"It's nothing, mama—just a little liquid powder."

"You march up-stairs and wash your face!" said her father. "Hear me? Don't you let me catch you painting up like that—singing doll!"

Emily began to cry.

"It's—it's nothing, papa. Everybody does it. The girls think I look so nice."

"Wash your face!" shouted her father. "March up and wash your face!"

"I don't want to!" sobbed Emily. "The girls say my eyes look twice as—"

Mr. Carter seized her by the shoulder and turned her toward the door.

"Want me to wash your face?" he asked her grimly. "No? I thought not. Well, then, you march!"

Emily, sobbing loudly, marched. They could hear her stumbling up-stairs, crying as she went.

"Oh, papa, you were awful!" Mrs. Carter wiped her own eyes. "The poor child!"

"Do you suppose that I'm going to let my daughter paint her face?" Mr. Carter fairly bellowed. "I reckon I've got enough in a daughter-in-law! I'll see to Emmy myself, if you can't!"

"Johnson, you know I didn't notice."

Mr. Carter emitted another roar, and finally threw himself into a chair and thrust his feet out.

"What did that fool William do?"

"You mean to-night?" Mrs. Carter dried her eyes. "He just met us at the door. He was so white he scared me, and he took Fanchon off in a taxi—in that scandalous dress! Said he'd give her a supper out to-night. I'm afraid you've done it this time, Johnson. What did you do to the poor boy?"

"Poor donkey! I told him what I thought of that woman—called by my name, too—a woman dressing like one of those yellow East Indian dancing-girls—that's what I told him."

"Johnson!"

"I did! What do you s'pose the congregation thought? By George, it made me hot all over! Did you see her legs?"

"You mean her stockings? They were a little startling. I told her so before we started."

"Startling? My word."

Mr. Carter relapsed into a terrible silence. Mrs. Carter sat helplessly looking at him. She was thinking of that dance, that terrible, amazing, dazzling dance. What a pretty creature, too! That was it; she had turned William's head; and Leigh's and Emily's, too. Those painted eyelashes! For a moment Mrs. Carter half laughed.

"It's funny—I can't help it, Johnson," she said, feebly apologetic, as she met his irate eyes. "I was thinking of Emmy trying to paint her lashes."

"I'm glad you think it's funny," he retorted hoarsely. "Don't see the joke myself. I've got too much daughter-in-law, that's my trouble!"

"Hush! There's some one now—they've come!" Mrs. Carter tiptoed to the door and listened, coming back, relieved. "No, it's only Dan."

"I wish William had Dan's sense!"

"I wish Dan would marry a nice home girl. It would make things better," sighed Mrs. Carter.

"Daniel marry?" Mr. Carter raised his voice again to a roar of discontent and hopelessness. "Who d'you think Dan could marry? What kind of a girl d'you think would pick a cripple?"

"Hush!"

Mrs. Carter, very pale, rose and shut the door; but she was too late. Daniel, suspecting the trouble in the library, had started for his own room. The stairs were just outside the library door, however, and he could not help hearing every word his father said. In fact, Mr. Carter's irate voice rang out like a trumpet. "What kind of a girl d'you think would pick a cripple?"

Daniel, clinging to the banisters, ascended more wearily than usual. The stairs turned at the landing, and he was out of sight when his mother shut the door. He never used a cane in the house now. He was well enough to get along with a heavy limp, and he made no noise as he crossed the upper hall and went into his own room. Once there, he locked his door, and, crossing to the window, stood staring out with absorbed and thoughtful eyes.

The night was perfect. A young moon had set, and there seemed to be, instead, a myriad of stars. He could discern, too, even in the darkness, the darker profile of the hills, and, nearer at hand, the clustering beauty of foliage, pierced here and there with the lights of near-by houses, which shone in the darkness, without any discernible outlines behind them, like fallen stars. The air was fragrant and soft, with the sweetness of flowering grapes, familiar and homelike, amid all that blended early blossoming.

He could hear soft, blurred sounds, too—the hum of insect life, the piping of frogs, the murmur of the brook that flowed not a hundred yards away. He stood motionless, thinking, and glad of the cool night air on his hot cheeks and brow. He felt as if some one had dealt him a physical blow, and his bruised flesh was still quivering under it.

"What kind of a girl d'you think would pick a cripple?"

Daniel shut his lips sharply over his clenched teeth. It wasn't a new idea; it wasn't even a suggestion. He had known it all along, he told himself, and yet the bare words were brutal. They seemed to brand him like hot iron, to shrivel into his shrinking flesh and leave the mark there.

"Cripple!" He remembered, in a flash, his well days—the days when he was like other boys, before the fall which lamed him. He remembered his own young scorn of the weakling and the maimed, the repugnance that the physically strong often feel toward the physically disabled. Yet there was nothing disfiguring in his trouble. He was lame, but he was not twisted; he only halted in his walk. But, none the less, he was a cripple.

"What kind of a girl d'you think would pick a cripple?"

Daniel stared steadily out into the night, as if the starry darkness held the answer. One by one he saw the lights go out in the houses near at hand. Farther off, lights still shone in the town, but darkness grew and grew. Then, far off, he detected a moving thing, saw a leap of flame and sparks as the smoke belched from the funnel of the engine. He could trace it coming nearer and nearer, and then he heard the clamor of its bell at the crossing, strangely distinct at night.

He turned slowly away, lit the lamp on his table, and, going to his desk, took out the picture of Virginia that he had stolen from the mantel down-stairs after Fanchon's attack upon it. He brought it to the table, and, setting it down beside him, began to write. From time to time, as he wrote, he glanced up at the young face in the frame, and felt an exquisite sense of companionship. He was not alone; the picture kept him company. The pallor of his face, too, gradually changed, and a slight color rose in his cheeks. He took off his coat and lit his pipe. Well into the small hours he worked steadily on a case for Judge Jessup.

He was aware of doors shutting below, aware that sounds gradually ceased and sleep drenched the household, but he worked on with the passionate zeal that only an ambitious man can feel—a man who has no other end in life but to forget himself in the fury of his toil. Yet, all the while, the young face of Virginia bore him mute company, and sometimes it seemed to smile upon him.

At daybreak, the fury of his thirst for work slaked, he lifted a haggard face to the light, glanced at the picture, and, stretching his arms across the table, laid his head upon them with a groan. He fell asleep there from sheer exhaustion, and was sleeping when the sun rose.

VII

William Carter took his wife to the inn for supper. He had appeared at the door of the Sunday-school hall with a taxi and abruptly bundled Fanchon into it. It was just after her performance on the stage and

before the audience began to disperse. In fact, they heard the strains of some very churchy music coming from the orchestra, as if an effort was being made—delayed but strenuous—to soothe the startled spectators of Fanchon's amazing dance.

William said nothing. He sat in the dark interior of the taxi with a face as white as paper, and Fanchon, watching him covertly, saw that the hand he laid on the window shook. She leaned back in her corner, twisting a strand of pearls around her throat—a strand that she had put on after the dance—and watching him; but she said nothing.

She had danced so wildly, indeed, that she was still panting and throbbing with excitement. She seemed to feel the thrill of the music even in her feet. It was intoxicating, it was what she loved—the glamour of the lights, the music, the motion. Her whole body vibrated, she could scarcely sit still, her feet still moved restlessly. She loved it!

Yet she felt that heavy silence of her husband, the stiffness of his body as he sat there, and she had caught a glimpse of his ghastly face. She bit her lips, staring out into the night, her bosom heaving passionately. She felt like a beautiful wild bird in a trap.

She stared, too, at the quiet street, with inveterate dislike of its quietness. She saw the group of loungers in front of the chemist's, the belated pedestrians at the crossing. There was a glimpse of shadowing trees, Pendent branches swept and swayed before feebly lighted show-windows where the shades were partly drawn down, and the infrequent street-lamps shot occasional lances of light across their dingy way. One such shaft struck on William's profile and revealed his tightened lips.

Fanchon wondered. She had not been aware of Mr. Carter's catapultic exit, and she did not know how much her husband knew. Some one must have telephoned him —whom, she could not conjecture. She shrank away from him a little, thinking, and Corwin's face rose before her mind's eye. She saw again the confidence of his smiling, mocking eyes, and she shuddered.

William seemed to feel it and gave her a quick look, but said nothing. The taxi had stopped in front of an old-fashioned inn. It was a long, low building with a glassed-in dining-room, built to accommodate the stream of motorists who had begun to tour the mountains and scatter gold and gasoline in their wake.

Into the new dining-room—a plain, bare place with rows of white-covered tables and a few lean palms on pedestals—William conducted his wife. Half a dozen negro waiters came forward. He selected one he knew, chose a remote table, and gave his order for supper.

"I suppose you want wine?" he said shortly to Fanchon—almost the first words he had addressed to her.

She shrugged, slipping off her wraps and amazing the other diners with the marvels of her costume.

"*Mais non,*" she replied indifferently. "I'm heated; I never drink wine when I have danced."

William, who was giving his order, stopped short a moment, his eyes down, and she saw him pant like a man short of breath. But in another moment he had despatched the waiter with his order and drained his glass of water.

"*Mon Dieu!*" said Fanchon, watching him with dark, mysterious, brooding eyes. "How can you? Iced water—it's bad for your liver!"

"Drat my liver!" said William hoarsely. Then he leaned across the table, his eyes raised to hers at last, and spoke in a low, even voice for her ears alone. "What have you been doing, Fanchon?"

She had never seen that look in his eyes before, and the blood rushed back to her heart. She could not answer for a moment; her lips moved without words.

"Do you hear?" he repeated sternly. "What have you been doing to-night?"

"I sang, you know I sang," she replied at last, but her eyes quivered and shrank away from his, and there was something about her like a child expecting a blow.

But William did not heed it; he was still white with passion.

"You did more than sing," he rejoined coldly. "You danced me into an insult!"

Her eyes dilated.

"An insult—you?"

"Yes, an insult. Father saw you. He came home and told me what he thought of you, and of me for letting you do it!"

Fanchon put her hand to her throat. She felt choked again, but her beautiful, wild, fawnlike eyes clung to his face.

"You danced," he went on bitterly. "What did you dance? One of those—those fandangos?"

Her face changed; a glimmer of light, of mischief, shot across it, and she let her jeweled hands drop in her lap.

"*Oui,* I danced! *Mais que voulez vous?* Am I not a dancer? You—it is you who are ashamed, *mon ami!*" she added bitterly. "Why you marry me, then?"

He threw himself back in his chair, his clenched hand falling on the table with a gesture as poignant as it was desperate.

"You've let the cat out of the bag! This place—these provincials! Why, this place is full of it by now. Did you think you were in Paris?"

"In Paris?" she laughed wildly. "*Mon Dieu, non! 'O Paris, c'est chez toi qu'il est doux de vivre, c'est chez toi que je veux mourir!'*"

"Drop that chatter!" he said harshly. "You speak English as well as I do."

She did not answer for a moment; then she leaned across the table, looking at him, her face white and her eyes sparkling.

"You're ashamed that you married me, a dancer—*n'est-ce-pas?*"

He averted his face. She caught only the haggard whiteness of the profile, and she saw his hand, stretched on the table, clench and unclench nervously. She drew a long breath.

"You're ashamed of me," she said in a low, quivering voice, recoiling from him. "I—I see it!"

"I loved you," said William passionately. "I loved you, I asked you to consider me, and—you do this!"

"You loved me?" she repeated the words slowly. "You—*loved*—me!"

She let the accent fall on the past tense, but he was deaf to the implied appeal.

"Fanchon, you knew what they'd think of it here — you must have

"IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME, I'LL SIT DOWN. I'VE GOT A WORD TO SAY—BUSINESS, YOU KNOW, STRICTLY BUSINESS"

known. Why did you do it?" he cried impatiently. "It's like your cigarette in the streets—you like to do these things!"

"*Mais oui,* I like to do them!" she replied softly. She laughed lightly. "I'm naughty, William, but"—she leaned toward him again, looking at him with her fawnlike eyes—"I'm sorry!"

Her look, her voice, her very attitude expressed surrender, and the softness of her tone appeased him. He turned his head reluctantly and looked at her. The light was behind her, making a nimbus behind her lovely head, her soft, dark hair, and her white forehead, and the beauty of her eyes. Her dress, too, the dancer's silky, shimmering, clinging robe, seemed to reveal just enough of her white neck and arms. She was a thing so young, so exquisite, and so subtly charming that he caught his breath. She looked as she had looked the first time he saw her, when he lost his heart and his head. Her dark eyes clung to his. "*Et toi?*" she murmured softly, exquisitely, her lips trembling a little.

WILLIAM, VERY RED, INCLINED HIS HEAD STIFFLY

Involuntarily he put out his hand and touched hers as it lay on the table, and the tenderness of that touch was a caress. For the moment he forgot his father and his own anger. She was bewitching, and she was his own! What did it matter if these narrow-minded provincials were shocked at her dancing?

Yet he was aware that while she accepted his caress, accepted his forgiveness, and gave him a soft and caressing smile, she was changed. Something had come between

them—something so subtle, so immaterial, that he could not grasp it; but he felt ill at ease. He said nothing, he did not know what to say, he felt that the grievance was honestly his, and yet, in some mysterious, unfathomable way, she had put him in the wrong.

He laughed uneasily and began to move the glasses about awkwardly, jingling the ice in them like a child. He was glad, too, that the waiter returned at that moment with the supper. He changed his order again and called for wine.

"I'm tired," he explained to Fanchon. "I feel as if I needed it."

She shrugged, elevating her brows and glancing around the room, aware that necks were craned here and there, and that some newcomers were staring steadily at her. One of them—a short, stout, bald-headed man in a dress-suit with a wide expanse of shirt-front—kept gazing at her, and after a while at William. He gazed and rubbed the top of his bald head, and then ate—taking large mouthfuls and gulping them down—while he still gazed at her.

Fanchon, seeing it, looked demurely at her plate, toying with her fork. She wanted to laugh, but she remembered her husband's horror of the sensation she had just made, and she was aware, too, of another figure farther away. She flushed a little, saying nothing, and William, still feeling that little rift in the lute, busied himself filling his wine-glass again.

Fanchon, who had never seen him drink wine, lifted her heavy eyes from her plate to watch him. She knew he had already filled his glass four times.

"He's not a drinking man," she thought shrewdly. "He's unhappy because he's married me, a dancer!"

William lifted his fifth glass slowly to his lips.

"It's not bad wine, Fanchon," he said lightly; "but we had better in Paris."

She shook her head.

"In Paris you didn't drink wine, *mon ami.*"

He reddened.

"Didn't I? I—" He stopped short.

The stout, bald-headed gentleman had risen abruptly from his table and was approaching theirs. He did not look at William, but bowed to Fanchon.

"Mrs. Carter, I believe?" he said suavely. "Mrs. William Carter?"

Fanchon smiled.

"*Mais oui,* and—Mr. William Carter," she added archly, looking at the astonished William.

The fat man bowed again, then he produced a card-case and laid his card on the table.

"I'm Samuel Bernstein," he said proudly, "president of the Unlimited Film Company. Perhaps you've heard of me, Mr. Carter?"

"No!" said William shortly, frowning. "I haven't had the pleasure."

Mr. Bernstein gave him a pitying glance.

"Go to the movies?" he asked mildly.

William nodded.

"Sometimes."

Mr. Bernstein elevated his brows. He looked at Fanchon, and his face changed and glowed with appreciation.

"Guess you go, madam," he said in a confident tone, "a lady of your talent! Excuse me"—he bowed first to one and then the other—"if you'll permit me, I'll sit down. I've got a word to say—business, you know, strictly business."

Fanchon's eyes danced. She threw a mocking look at William's stiffening face.

"Sit down, Mr. Bernstein," she said sweetly. "*Voilà!* I love the movies!"

"There!" Bernstein beamed, drawing up a chair. "I knew a lady of your talent must love 'em." He waved his hand gracefully, speaking to William now, but including William's wife. "I want to say, sir, that I witnessed that dance to-night, and—well, sir, it hit me straight in the bull's-eye! Never saw it better done—never! I congratulate Mrs. Carter, sir, and I congratulate you. It was a gem!"

William, very red, inclined his head stiffly, but Fanchon was radiant with smiles.

"*Merci du compliment!*" she murmured.

"Eh? Oh, you're French, ain't you?" Mr. Bernstein returned her smile genially. "Corwin was telling me you were Mamselle Fonchon lay Fare. That would sound a top-liner, too, on a bill-board. Corwin—you know him? Yes? Well, he's running a vaudeville show somewhere now, besides that hairy piano man, and he wants you in his show. I suspicioned that right off."

"My wife isn't a show-woman!" thundered William, his brow black.

"No offense, no offense, Mr. Carter!" Mr. Bernstein waved a fat hand on which a diamond flashed magnificently. "I don't cotton to these cheap shows myself. Now, madam, I'm a business man, and I've got a

proposition to make to you, a gilt-edged proposition." He edged his chair nearer, looking from Fanchon to William and back again, with the air of a benefactor. "It 'll appeal to you, sir. It's dignified, it's fine, and it's money, sir, good money! Now, I saw that dance to-night and I says to myself, 'Sammy Bernstein, if you're a man you'll beat it after that first thing,' and I'm beating it. Madam, I'd offer you, as a starter, five hundred dollars a week to give that dance in a picture, a high-class, six-reel picture, for the Unlimited Film Company!" Mr. Bernstein flung himself back in his chair, thrust his thumbs into the armholes of his white waistcoat, and beamed upon them. "Five hundred dollars a week, madam, and your expenses—for one picture. You can't beat that—Corwin ain't going to beat that!"

"My wife won't go into the movies!" said William, white with anger.

Mr. Bernstein reddened.

"I reckon you don't understand, sir. The Unlimited Film Company is a star company, sir; it does the finest pictures in the country; we've got more stars than any other company this side of the Rockies. We got 'em, and we treat 'em right."

William rose furiously.

"My wife isn't looking for an engagement, sir, so we bid you good evening!"

Mr. Bernstein rose hastily.

"I say—no offense—"

"You're very good," said Fanchon softly, lingering an instant as William strode away; "but I'm not in it—not now! My husband doesn't like it, you know. *Adieu, monsieur, et merci!*"

She was smiling, a little flushed, altogether charming, as she lifted her fawn-like countenance to his red face. Mr. Bernstein relaxed and grinned knowingly.

"I see! I'm sorry, madam. Put my foot in it, eh?" He lowered his voice. "I'll make it eight hundred a week—see?"

She nodded, but William had turned a white face toward them, and she fled lightly, following him in his hasty stride through the now crowded dining-room. She had caught her wraps up hastily and thrown them about her shoulders, and the chiffon frills framed her small, pointed chin.

The diners—belated motorists and traveling salesmen—stared delightedly. The scene was as plain as a charade, the angry young husband and the lovely, coquettish, frivolous young wife. Fanchon caught whispers of admiration and glances of sympathy. At another moment they would have pleased her, would have appealed to every instinct of her light, admiration-loving nature, but to-night she saw some one ahead, some one whom she must pass, and she was thinking, thinking hard and fast, her heart beating pitifully under the splendor of her dancing dress.

Meanwhile William stalked ahead, with his square jaw set and his eyes stormy. He wanted to wring Bernstein's neck and he could not. It made his hands clench and unclench nervously at his sides.

As they neared the door, a tall man rose from a crowded table and greeted Fanchon in French with an effusion that made William halt. Corwin caught his eye and bowed.

"Present me to your husband," he said to Fanchon.

She turned with that delicate grace which made her small figure seem so light and buoyant. She had rallied all her forces, all her will. She smiled, her eyes shining dangerously.

"William, this is my old friend, Mr. Corwin."

William shook hands stiffly.

"We're just going," he said shortly. "Good night!"

Fanchon laughed, half-apologetic, half-coquettish; but she found herself hurried out into the hall.

"Who's that fellow?" asked William sharply.

She was still laughing, half hysterical.

"Caraffi's manager, Aristide Corwin—I've known him for ages."

William grunted.

"Looks like a Monte Carlo gambler," he said, and signaled for a taxi.

VIII

Virginia bade Lucas stop the horses. The old wagonette was on its way out to Denbigh Crossing, and Daniel Carter had just come in sight. Virginia thought she had never seen him look so pale.

"He looks ill, and his limp is bad, too, poor fellow!" she breathed to herself; but she smiled, leaning over the back of the seat to shake hands.

"Where have you kept yourself, Dan?" she asked kindly, with the sweetness in her tone that Daniel had come to recognize as pity. "Grandfather has been asking for you."

"I'm afraid he wants the book he lent me," said Daniel, looking up at her and aware of the softness of her glance. She looked lovely, that same old shade hat looped down and the knot of pink under her

"MERCY! DON'T SAY THAT OUT LOUD." SHE LAUGHED, BUT HER BLUSH DEEPENED

chin; but the muslin dress was dotted white Swiss this time, with a little opening at the neck that showed a lovely throat. "I'll bring it back this week."

"Fie! As if he wanted the old book! We've missed you, Dan."

He flushed boyishly and let his eyes dwell upon her. And, for the first time in her life, Virginia blushed consciously under Daniel's look.

"Have you really?" he asked eagerly.

"Really and truly!" She nodded at him, smiling. "I should have written you a note about it—invited you to dinner, in fact, if it had not been for our—our concert—" She blushed this time, remembering suddenly that there must have been an earthquake in the Carter house. "I've just finished settling up the accounts with Mrs. Payson," she added hurriedly. "I'm glad it's over!"

There was a ghost of laughter in Daniel's eyes, but he kept a sober face.

"It was a success, then, Virginia?"

"Oh, yes! We paid in our full share; no one out of pocket except Mr. Payson. You know, he paid Caraffi. Dan, did you hear Caraffi play?"

He shook his head.

"I'd rather hear you."

"Mercy! Don't say that out loud." She laughed, but her blush deepened. It seemed to-day as if there was something new in Daniel, something she did not understand. "Come and hear me play, though, and I'll believe you."

Daniel glanced at the very conscious but decorous back of Lucas, and smiled. No

one was ever worried about what Daniel said!

"I'm coming. I've been wanting to come all along," he said gravely; "but—I'm afraid of wearing out my welcome."

She looked surprised, then, catching his eye, realized that Daniel had been afraid that William's brother was unwelcome. She blushed gloriously this time.

"You couldn't—you couldn't if you tried," she said softly. Then to the coachman: "Go on, Lucas. I mustn't keep you, Dan, but be sure you come soon."

He stood bareheaded in the sunshine, watching the old wagonette disappear; then he put on his hat and walked haltingly and slowly toward the court-house. He was to address the jury in the afternoon, and in some way the sight of Virginia always helped him. He seemed to carry her smile, like sunshine, into the old dim court-room. He always spoke well afterward, so well that he was getting the name of an orator without being aware of it.

Plato had just served a light lunch for Colonel Denbigh on the lawn. The old man, sitting under his favorite horse-chestnut-tree, ate sparingly and drank one iced julep, made in the old Virginia style. He had finished, and Plato was holding the lighter for his cigar.

"Go to the concert the other night, Plato? Miss Virginia says you carried her bundles, and she thinks you heard it all."

Plato held the lighter dexterously.

"Yessuh, I went 'long wid Miss Jinny. Didn't pay no 'mission fee, jus' walked righ' in, same as Miz Payson an' de quality. Yessuh, de music mighty fine, but I was lookin' at young Miz Carter when she was dancin'. Dat's what done took dis yere nigger!"

The colonel puffed at his cigar, a twinkle in his eye.

"Like it, Plato?"

"Yessuh! It was de mos' circumspecklar dancin' I ever see, suh, it sho was. I ain't seen nuffin like it since de circus. But Mirandy Parsons, de collud girl dat works at Miz Carter's, she says dere was terr'ble goings-on dere 'bout dis yere dance. She 'lowed Mist' Carter mos' throw a fit."

Colonel Denbigh took off his hat and ran his fingers through his white hair.

"It was a great dance, Plato, a great dance." He shook with silent laughter. "Some of the weaker brethren had to leave, though."

"Dey sho did, suh! I met de Baptist minister comin' out, an' de ladies was wid him. Dey was sayin' something 'bout dat dance in de Bible, an' 'bout John de Baptist's head on a charger. Seems like he took it hard—I don't mean John de Baptist, but de minister. Done paid five dollahs fo' his sittin', an' couldn't set out no five dollahs' worth. Dat's what got him mad, suh, it sho was."

The colonel shouted with laughter.

"He got more than five dollars' worth out of that dance, Plato! There's Miss Jinny now," he added, glancing down the driveway. "You go and help her out with her packages."

The old wagonette had entered the gateway, and Plato hurried off across the lawn; but the horses stopped short, and Virginia got out, meeting some one who had entered from the opposite direction. The colonel, well in the shade of his horse-chestnut, removed his cigar from his mouth. He was startled. The visitor was William Carter.

While Plato was taking a number of small packages from the wagonette, the pair greeted each other in the sunlit space of the old driveway. Something in their faces made the colonel rise silently and deftly beat a retreat. He passed behind the old box hedge and made his way back to the house.

"I reckon they'd like to have it out by themselves," he thought.

Virginia, meanwhile, came across the lawn with William Carter. She stopped as she came near the horse-chestnut.

"Why, I thought grandfather was here!" she exclaimed, and then to William: "Won't you sit down? I'll call him."

"But I didn't come to see him," said William quietly. "I came to see you, Virginia. I suppose I may sit down just the same?"

She blushed.

"Of course!" She took off her hat and laid it on the rustic table, and the sunshine seemed to caress the strands of gold in her soft hair. "We like to sit out here, you know, in summer. It seems so good to be out-of-doors. Do you notice what a view we have, since they cut that new street through?"

She was talking hurriedly, a little nervously, not looking at him. It was their first moment alone together since his return, and Virginia was not quite sure of herself. She pointed out the view.

William turned and looked at it absently.

"You can see a long way, can't you?"

"Yes; and there's such a glimpse now of blooming things. The old magnolia's full of buds."

"Fanchon doesn't like these things," said William moodily. "They bore her. She says she'd rather see one of those electric signs in New York, flashing Budweiser beer in and out, than sit here and count lightning-bugs!"

Virginia laughed, blushing again.

"What would we do if we all liked the same thing?" she asked lightly, and then, very sweetly: "William, I think your wife is beautiful. At first, one can't decide, the face is so charming, so piquant; but when she smiles and those dark eyes of hers dwell on you—she's beautiful!"

William said nothing for a moment. He was sitting in the colonel's chair, his hat on his knees, and Virginia could see new haggard lines in his face. He did not look at her, but away toward a distant spire that appeared above the thick foliage, like a finger pointing upward.

"Yes, she's beautiful," he admitted at last, almost with reluctance.

Virginia, aware that he was thinking of days long ago, when he had taken her to church and carried her books home from school, felt her breath coming short. She was trying hard, but if he would not meet her half-way, how could she patch it up?

She averted her face, toying with her grandfather's empty glass. The ice still jingled in it a little, and William started. He remembered jingling the ice in the glasses on the inn table, and Fanchon's eyes seemed to mock him. He drew a long sigh.

"I hope you don't mind my sitting here, Virginia," he said gravely. "It's—it's so homelike. I can't bear to go. I suppose lost spirits hang around sometimes outside the gates of paradise."

Virginia caught her breath this time. She dared not look at him. She had taken a ring out of her pocket and held it out in the palm of her hand; but now, looking at his set profile, she hardly dared to speak of it. Her hand trembled; he was unhappy, and he had come to her! Something like fear showed in her eyes, but she forced herself to speak.

"I wish you'd come in and see grandfather. He'd be glad, I know. We meant to come to see your wife again—some evening when you would be at home."

William lifted his head slowly and looked at her.

"Virginia, I got the letters you sent me," he said in a low voice. "The reason I didn't return yours was—I burned them one night in Paris just before—"

He stopped, unable to go on, red in the face; but she was quite calm. His very embarrassment steadied her.

"That's all right," she said. "I'm glad you spoke, because I wanted to give you this." She held out her hand with the ring in her palm. "I know it belonged to your grandmother. I was afraid to trust it to the mails. Here it is, William."

He held out his hand stiffly, without looking at her, and Virginia had to put the ring into it.

"Thank you," he said in a low voice.

Then he looked in a dazed way at the ring lying in his hand. The color slowly receded from his flushed face and left it pale. He remembered the day he had put it on her finger!

So did she; but Virginia was a brave woman. She could not help seeing his face, and, being a woman, she knew. She could shape the whole story easily now. She had heard rumors of Mr. Carter's wrath at Fanchon's dance, and she knew what William must have felt. The talk must have reached him. This was the recoil. She loved him, and she understood. It would have tempted another woman; it frightened Virginia. She tried to think of something to say, but she could not.

They sat silently, the shade of the horse-chestnut stretching over them. Beyond them the sun shone on the old lawns and flower-beds. They were so motionless that a robin, searching for worms, came almost up to their feet.

"Do you mind my sitting around here?" he asked again in a low voice. "It's the most restful place I've found."

She steadied her voice.

"It is a restful place. Once we thought we'd have to give it up, but some stocks paid in, and we saved it. I'm so glad!"

William straightened himself.

"I didn't know that."

She was startled. She had not thought that he would take it in this way. Everything led them into the shoals, it seemed. She smiled, but her lips shook.

"I don't think any one knew it but Dan," she replied gently. "Dan helped us save it."

"I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY SITTING HERE, VIRGINIA," HE SAID GRAVELY. "I CAN'T BEAR TO GO. I SUPPOSE LOST SPIRITS HANG AROUND SOMETIMES OUTSIDE THE GATES OF PARADISE"

"Dan?" He turned and looked at her, plainly startled, too, by another thought. "Dan?"

She met his look steadily this time.

"Yes, Dan. He's so good to us. I think he's very noble."

William stared at her, paling again. A kind of fury came into his look, and she saw it. He was jealous of Dan! She understood now. That poor girl, his wife, had been a wild fancy, an episode, no more, and he was waking up.

She rose slowly to her feet.

"Come," she said. "I'm going in. Grandpa is there, and you must come in and see him."

She turned as she spoke, and William got to his feet, still white and haggard, his eyes following her. But Virginia stopped abruptly. Before them on the lawn, unheard and unseen in her approach, stood a small, white-clad figure in a daring scarlet hat, pale and piquant.

"I don't think you heard me," said Fanchon softly, her dark eyes flashing from one to the other. "You weren't listening!" And she laughed shrilly.

William crimsoned, but Virginia was calm.

"No, we didn't," she replied simply; "but I'm glad to see you. We were just going into the house—will you come, too?"

Fanchon lifted her fawnlike eyes slowly to the other girl's face. There was something noble in it, too noble for the retort that was on the end of her sharp tongue. She colored angrily.

"Of course! I came to call," she said lightly. "William got ahead of me, I see."

Virginia did not reply to this. She was already at the piazza steps.

"Please come this way," she said lightly.

But Fanchon did not answer her. She had approached her husband, her large eyes mocking him, her lips parted. A strange look, half elfish, half fond, was on her face.

"You needn't be in such a hurry to hide that ring," she said below her breath. "I know about it. There was one letter you forgot to burn, *mon ami!*"

He turned from red to white. His only comfort was Virginia's noble, unconscious look as she led the way into the house.

IX

Colonel Denbigh accompanied his guests to the door, and, after the farewells were sufficiently prolonged to suit his old-fashioned ways, he stood on the piazza and watched them to the gate. Fanchon turned there, a small, graceful creature, and kissed her hand to him. The colonel waved. William raised his hat, and the two figures turned off into the street.

As they grew smaller in the distance, Virginia came out and stood beside her grandfather.

"A pretty creature," said the colonel thoughtfully. "Claws in velvet! What do you think of her, Jinny?"

"I don't know," Virginia replied honestly. "She's pretty—but there's something I can't describe. She's like a wild bird just put in a gilt cage. It's a terribly trite simile, but it fits her. She's beating her wings."

"That's poetry, Jinny," said the colonel, chuckling. "It's because she's young and pretty. If she'd been a man, with that kind of an eye, we would have said something about beating his hoofs—I mean cloven ones. She sings like a bird, dances like a fairy, and behaves—well, I remember that Mrs. Payson called her something in French. What was it, eh? Maybe it takes French to express her."

Virginia flushed.

"She called her a little *étourdie*. Of course she does queer things; she's not well-bred, and she seems like a bundle of impulsive whims, but she's rather captivating in all of them, and fascinating in some."

"Humph!" The colonel pulled his mustache thoughtfully. "I see you're determined to like her, Jinny."

"I want to—yes."

"You can't," said the colonel gently, laying his hand on her shoulder. "It's a case of sugar and salt, you can't mix 'em. Don't try too hard, Jinny. Leave her alone."

Something in his tone made Virginia look up quickly.

"Why, sir?"

Colonel Denbigh hesitated; then he blushed like a girl.

"I don't talk scandal, Jinny, you know that, but I hear some. Let her alone."

"Oh, that dance—"

He shook his head.

"No, not the dance. That only unloosed tongues. You spoke of that man, Caraffi's manager—what was his name?"

"Corwin. A horrid creature," said Virginia, suddenly recalling Fanchon's face

MR. BERNSTEIN STOPPED SHORT. "GEE, WHAT A VIEW! ONLY NEEDS A LITTLE LIFE IN IT, COLONEL—A COW AND A ROUGH-RIDER, AND MAYBE A COUPLE OF BANDITS"

when she saw him in the waiting-room of the hall.

The colonel nodded.

"Corwin—that's the name. Well, William's wife knows him, she's been seen walking with him. There's talk about it. It may be all false, but I'd rather you kept away."

Virginia had grown very thoughtful.

"I remember now, grandfather. She seemed afraid of him, poor girl. He's a terrible creature, I'm sure—I wonder if he isn't doing it on purpose? Starting the talk, I mean."

"Very likely," said the colonel dryly; "but he'd have to have something to start on. When there's so much smoke, there's some fire. I don't like her, and yet"—he smiled—"what a pretty creature!"

"She's not twenty, I'm sure. I think it's wicked to talk so about her." Virginia flushed generously. "Why are people so cruel?"

The colonel smiled.

"Jinny," he said gently, "that little woman wouldn't raise her finger to save you from the gallows."

Virginia's blush deepened.

"That doesn't matter, grandfather!"

The old man looked at her proudly. She was standing beside him, her tall young head nearly level with his own, and her charming profile toward him. She had a look that was better in his eyes than mere

beauty—a look of noble purity. He had never known her, even in childhood, to tell a falsehood. He patted her shoulder.

"I leave it to you, Jinny. I reckon I can trust you. But there's one thing I want to say." He hesitated, then he finished firmly: "That boy, William, disappoints me. He's lost his grip. He's been keeping gay company, I reckon, and he looks as if he'd been drinking. If it wasn't for his lameness, Daniel's twice the man!"

Virginia said nothing. She couldn't; her heart was beating in her throat. She remembered William's face when she returned the ring.

The colonel kept his hand on her shoulder, and they stood together, looking out across the close-cut lawn. Lucas, having put up the horses, was running a lawn-mower near the gate. It was that hour when the shadows begin to lengthen and one perceives the fragrance of the honeysuckle. It seemed to penetrate the late, warm afternoon, and to gather bees.

"Jinny, who's that man—the fat man with a bald head?" the colonel asked presently. "He's either a real-estate man or a lunatic. He wants to buy the place, I reckon. See him?"

Virginia, who had been in a trance, roused herself. Her eyes fell on a stout figure advancing toward the piazza, hat in hand.

"He wants to tune the piano, grandpa, or to varnish the mahogany tables." She laughed softly, and fled lightly toward the door. "I'm going. You can send him away. I refuse to be varnished!"

The colonel heard her flight to the stairs; but he stood his ground and waited, a twinkle in his eye. The stout man approached steadily, with an expression of genial politeness. He had an air of feeling his own importance, but being willing to condescend. He wore a finely-tailored suit, a sport necktie with a diamond pin, and, in the sunshine, his bald head looked like a piece of polished pink coral set in Florida moss.

"Colonel Denbigh, I believe?" he said suavely.

The colonel bowed politely.

"That's my name, sir."

Mr. Bernstein presented his card.

"I'd like a word with you, colonel. Strictly business—important, confidential business."

The colonel regarded him a moment with the same twinkle in his eyes; then he descended the piazza steps.

"Come this way, Mr. Bernstein. I like to sit out of doors. Have a cigar?"

Mr. Bernstein accepted, They had reached the back of the house now, and he stopped short.

"Gee, what a view! Ain't that about three thousand feet out there? Finest three-reel picture I ever got in a bird's-eye view! Only wants a little life in it, colonel—a cow and a rough-rider, and maybe a couple of bandits. It's just the set—with them mountains behind."

The colonel, who had reached his favorite seat under the horse-chestnut, looked startled.

"I reckon you're a movie man, aren't you?" he inquired mildly.

"Had 'em before?" Mr. Bernstein looked anxious.

"One or two. This place seems to appeal to them. Sit down, Mr. Bernstein, you'll find that seat comfortable. I always take this one—I'm getting old and set in my ways. I suppose it's the place you're interested in?"

Mr. Bernstein edged his chair closer to the wicker table and leaned across it.

"Say," he began with a glow of enthusiasm, "this place and that servant and you! It would be great. I says to Greenfield—he's my best director—I says to him before I came up here, 'Now what we want is one of them old-time, sort of before-the-war Southern aristocrats.' When I saw you, colonel, I—gee, sir, I says to myself: 'Sammy Bernstein, there's your man!' It ain't your clothes, colonel, it's the way you look. Say, I've got a fellow at the studio—dress him up in a silk hat and white tie and patent-leather pumps, and he looks like a duke. But you put that guy into his every-days, and, bless your soul, you wouldn't know him from a tin-pedler! Now, it ain't so with you. You'd look the part in your shirt-sleeves. When I saw you, I says to myself: 'Sam Bernstein, there's the real article—ain't any near-seal about that, either!'"

"Mr. Bernstein, say no more," said the colonel. "I'm a modest man!"

Bernstein expanded, smiling.

"Sir, I'll make it two thousand dollars for this place, that old negro, and you in one five-reeler. Two thousand dollars down! Isn't any work in it. You just stand and look natural."

This time the colonel's eyes did more than twinkle; he laughed heartily.

"Mr. Bernstein, I never looked natural before a camera in my life. I'm afraid we can't come to an agreement. I'm too old for the movies, sir. I'll have to decline."

Bernstein's face fell.

"You don't mean it, colonel; you can't mean that!"

The colonel nodded, then he pulled a moment at his cigar.

"I'm afraid I do mean it. Perhaps Plato—that's my man—might be interested. I'll ask him."

Bernstein held up his hands.

"Not without you, colonel!" He sat and stared for a moment at the old man opposite, a look of hopeless commiseration on his face. "Say," he groaned at last, "you people down here haven't got any enterprise! This is my second experience. I'm surprised, colonel; I'm pained. This town—it's perfect, sir, for the part, it's kind of dead-and-alive and shady, and there's the piccaninnies. You could do any amount of close-ups and cut-backs on 'em. Gee, it's too bad!" He shook his head regretfully.

"I reckon you could get the piccaninnies all right," remarked the colonel comfortingly. "Tried it?"

Mr. Bernstein shook his head.

"No, sir! I've been after Mrs. William Carter. Know her?"

The colonel, a little startled, took the cigar from between his teeth.

"I have that honor, sir."

The motion-picture manager turned his head slowly and gave him a cryptic look. Then he knocked the ashes from his cigar, stuck it in the other corner of his mouth, and resumed sadly:

"It was that dance of hers. That's what took me! At the church sociable, colonel. Believe me, I was never so thrilled in my life. I was doin' the town, looking for a place"—Mr. Bernstein waved his hand with a melancholy air—"for this place, sir. Well, I was goin' down Main Street, an' I see them headlights. 'Something doing here,' thinks I, 'an' I'll have a look.' Didn't expect anything; but somehow I went in, an' the very first thing I see is that dance. Gee whiz! I says to myself: 'Sammy Bernstein, this is your lucky day; this is a find!'"

Colonel Denbigh laid down the stump of his cigar and pulled his mustache.

"I suppose you've asked her?"

"I did. And I'll say right now that I don't think—what's his name?—Mr. William Henry Carter's got any horse-sense. He took on as if I'd insulted him when I was offerin' his wife five hundred dollars a week. That's what I offered, Colonel Denbigh—five hundred dollars a week, good money."

The colonel looked reflective.

"I'm afraid we're behind the times down here, Mr. Bernstein. I reckon Mr. Carter doesn't like publicity. We're quiet, backwoods people, sir," he added with a twinkle. "I know the lady. She's mighty pretty, and I agree with you she'd make a mighty fine picture. Just the style you want, too."

"No, sir, not my style. The public—well, it's this way. They like 'em small, an' this lady's just the pattern—a cute, dark little thing. Personally"—Mr. Bernstein sighed—"I like 'em large. Now there's Rosamond Silvertree—you know her, of course, colonel?"

Again the colonel smoothed his mustache thoughtfully.

"Can't say that I do, sir," he replied gently. "Pretty name, though?"

"Don't know Rosamond Silvertree?" Mr. Bernstein struck the table with the palm of his hand. "Sir, you're behind your times! She's a motion-picture star, sir! She's my ideal woman, Colonel Denbigh. She's five feet eleven inches, and she weighs one hundred and eighty-seven pounds. She's a peach, sir! Got those blue eyes that go to the heart, and her hair's the color of butter—makes you think of good butter in spring-time! I have her on the screen all the time. The poor girl's nearly worn out. The only trouble is you can't always get men to play opposite to her. Greenfield comes up one day last month. 'Sammy,' says he, 'I can't put Rosy in "The Dream of the Harem."' 'What in thunder d'you mean by that?' says I. 'Can't do it,' says he. 'Jack Pickling'—that's our leading man—'Jack Pickling looks like a shrimp beside of her!' What d'you think I did, Colonel Denbigh?"

The colonel shook his head gravely.

"I've no idea, sir. Put her on a diet?"

"Diet? Rosy? No, sir! I fired Jack Pickling!"

Bernstein lay back in his chair and smiled. He felt that he had reached the climax, but the climax was lost on Colonel Denbigh.

"DANNY, SHE'S WILLIE'S WIFE, AND SHE'S BEING TALKED ABOUT"

"If your leading lady is so fine, I shouldn't think you'd need Mrs. Carter," he observed mildly.

Mr. Bernstein smiled with a superior air.

"That's just why I do need her! You see, Rosy won't do for these little teeny-weeny ingénue parts. She's too grand! Mrs. Carter's the kid for those. That's what I want her for. But this Aristide Corwin"—Mr. Bernstein leaned over the table and touched the colonel's sleeve with his fat forefinger—"Aristide ain't behaving like a gentleman, Colonel Denbigh. He knew the lady in France, and he's got some kind of a pull. I guess he wants her in vaudeville again. She's been there once, I know. He's using his methods—they ain't mine, sir! He's talkin' bad, he—"

Colonel Denbigh rose abruptly and stood looking down on Mr. Bernstein from his full height.

"I know the Carters, sir," he said sternly. "I've known Mr. Johnson Carter since I was a young man. His boys played on this place. I have the honor of his daughter-in-law's acquaintance. You will kindly drop this subject, sir!"

Mr. Bernstein rose also. He was very pale, but the small eyes in the creases of his fat face looked honest. They even looked indignant.

"No offense, colonel," he said, "no offense. If you're a friend of the lady, I think you ought to know. Corwin's been persecuting her before. I've heard he drove her out of London. He's after her again, he means mischief. I know Aristide! If you're—"

He stopped with his mouth open. The colonel had walked away and left him.

"Well, I'll be darned!" said Mr. Bernstein, staring after the old man's erect figure. "I'm darned! Now, Sammy Bernstein, that comes of trying to help a woman. Never again!"

He selected a cigar from the box that Colonel Denbigh had unwittingly left upon the table, and, having lit it with the colonel's match, he went slowly and thoughtfully away. As he went, he sighed.

"Too bad, too bad!" he muttered. "Take him all around, the lean way he stands—with striped trousers an' that property coat—he'd make just an ideal close-up! I wonder"—he rubbed his bald head thoughtfully—"I wonder if he'd have

dropped if I'd offered him three thousand dollars to play *Uncle Sam* opposite to Rosy's *Liberty?*"

X

Mrs. Johnson Carter sat in the old rocker in the library, rocking nervously, her feet tapping the floor. Her usually placid face had of late become as troubled as an inland lake assailed by contrary winds. It was growing full of new puckers and furrows between the eyes.

She crossed and uncrossed her hands in her lap, and glanced absently from time to time toward the window. She happened to be alone in the house except for Miranda. An occasional sound from the region of the kitchen informed her that the colored maid of all work was at the helm; but not even the recklessness of Miranda's slams and thumps moved Mrs. Carter from her chair. She was waiting for some one to come in—some one to whom she could unbosom herself.

As the time passed and she heard the monotonous ticking

FANCHON CAME TO THE DOOR AND STOOD THERE WITH FLASHING EYES. "YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT ME," SHE SAID

of the clock on the mantel, she was seized with a kind of panic. She dreaded Mr. Carter's arrival. If he came first, she might break down and tell him, and she was afraid to tell him. She wanted Daniel. Unconsciously, in her hour of need, she always turned to Daniel now. William had been her mainstay, but it was obvious that William could not be her mainstay any longer. The old saw about a son marrying a wife held good in his case.

She waited, and the clock ticked tumultuously, as clocks do when you wait. She began to rock violently again, and she nearly upset herself by a tremendous start when the door finally opened. She thought it was Mr. Carter, but it was only Emily with some books under her arm.

Emily came to the door of the library and looked in. She had long ago obeyed her father's order and washed her face. It was guiltless even of becoming make-up, but she had an unnatural look to her mother for all that.

"What's the matter, mama?" she asked. "Where's Fanchon? Has Leigh come in?"

Mrs. Carter shook her head. She had stopped rocking and was staring at her daughter. Emily saw it and retreated.

"I think I'll go up-stairs," she said hurriedly. "I passed the exams, mama. Mr. Brinsted says I can go to high school in September."

A gleam of momentary pleasure shot across Mrs. Carter's worried face, but she did not withdraw her fixed gaze.

"Emmy, you come here," she said suddenly. "I want to look at your dress."

Emily backed.

"Oh, I want to go up-stairs, mama. I'm hot and tired. Mr. Brinsted's so prosy. Sallie Payson says—"

Mrs. Carter rose and made a dive at the hem of her daughter's skirt.

"Well, I declare!" she exclaimed. "I couldn't think what made it hang like that! You've been taking it in on every seam to make it narrower."

Emily pulled away, blushing.

"It was just horrid—all out of style, mama!" she cried. "I hate to—to look like a frump!"

Mrs. Carter straightened up from her consideration of the skirt.

"Where did you get those striped silk stockings, Emily Carter?"

Emily, backing toward the door, looked sullen.

"Dan gave me the money," she answered shortly. "I wanted something like other girls."

"I never saw such awful stockings in my life!" replied her mother. "Your legs look like barbers' poles. You take them off, or I'll have to tell your father."

Emily grew tearful.

"I—I think you're real mean, mama. I hate to be a frump!"

"Who called you a frump?" her mother asked severely.

"N-no one—but Fanchon says the people here are all provincials and frumps—all of them!" stormed Emily. "And I think we're awful frumps ourselves!"

Mrs. Carter gazed at her in a dazed way; then she retreated to her rocking-chair.

"Emily, you go up-stairs and rip those inside bastes out of that skirt. It looks frightful; it hangs all up and down in waves! And listen—"

Emily, still sniffing violently, was halfway to the stairs.

"Listen, Emily, you take off those stockings, too. They're vulgar. If you don't, I'll have to do it myself."

"I don't see why I can't wear them!" Emily stormed. "I'm grown up, I'm sixteen, and Fanchon has a pair like them."

Mrs. Carter flushed.

"You go up-stairs and take them off!" she cried, with her first dash of anger. "I don't want my girl to look like Fanchon!"

Emily grasped the banisters and shouted.

"She's lovely; she's stylish! I think you and papa are just awful to her. You're setting Willie against her, too. Leigh thinks so; he says he'd do anything, he'd die for her!"

Mrs. Carter looked a little startled, but she rallied.

"Leigh's only eighteen," she observed dryly. "It's very easy to die for people at eighteen! You're impertinent to your mother, Emily. Go up-stairs and study for an hour. Mind you take off those stockings!"

Emily began to cry. She cried easily, large tears rolling out of her light-blue eyes. She went up-stairs looking like Niobe, and she cried all the time she was taking off her stockings.

Mrs. Carter stopped rocking and thought. She thought deeply. Emily's outburst and Leigh's devotion were such obvious things, and yet—

She lifted her handkerchief and pressed it against her trembling lips. Was William really being set against his wife? Mrs. Carter was a good woman, and the thought distressed her.

She did not resume her rocking, she sat motionless, looking straight ahead of her, her face red. She was still sitting there when Daniel, returning early from court, stopped at the door and looked in.

"What's the matter, mother?" he asked pleasantly. "You look out of sorts."

"Oh, Dan, please come in here a moment; I want to talk to you."

Daniel looked a little surprised, but he came in obediently, putting a pile of law-books and papers on the table as he sat down to listen. His mother saw the papers.

"Did you win that case, Dan?"

His face lit up.

"Yes. Just heard the verdict. We've got it, mother!"

She flushed with pleasure.

"Dan, the judge says you'll be a great man some day. You're a born orator!"

"Nonsense!" said Daniel, but he blushed.

It seemed to his mother's anxious eyes that he was less worn and tired than usual; but her mind was full of other things.

"Dan," she began in a low, horrified voice, "have you seen anything? I mean —Fanchon and that—that man?"

Daniel shook his head.

"I'm too busy, mother."

Mrs. Carter sank back in her rocking-chair and looked weak.

"I saw them this morning. I'd been to market. Mrs. Payson came along in her new limousine, and she stopped and picked me up. I don't know why it had to happen so, but the chauffeur took the short cut for this house—you know, the little lane behind the Methodist church."

She paused for breath, and Daniel nodded. He was very grave now.

"As we turned the corner we both saw them—I mean Mrs. Payson and I—and of course the chauffeur did, too, come to think of it. Fanchon was talking to that man—I think his name's Corwin."

"Well, mother, if she knows him, perhaps she had to speak to him."

"Speak to him? They were walking up and down in that out-of-the-way corner, and they were quarreling. I'm sure they were quarreling. They didn't notice us."

"Quarreling?" Daniel laughed. "I thought you were going to say that he was making love to her."

"It's just the same thing—the way they looked. Mrs. Payson thought so, too. Daniel, there's talk about them; I know there is! What shall I do?"

"Don't you think you'd better leave it alone, mother?" Daniel suggested. "I'm not sure that we're not to blame. Fanchon seems to think we are."

"You're not taking her part, are you, Dan? Emily—that child's ridiculous, she's copying her — Emily says we're setting Willie against her."

Daniel smiled.

"I'm afraid Emmy's right," he said quietly. "It's too bad, mother."

"We never meant to do that—I mean your father and I!" cried Mrs. Carter with emotion. "I can't see why those two children adore her so. Emmy says Leigh would die for her!" she added with a tremulous laugh.

"She's got Leigh twisted about her finger—that's true enough," said Daniel, smiling grimly. "I found a poem of his the other day. It was addressed to 'my soul-mate'! The mate was plainly Fanchon. Poor Leigh—he'll survive it!"

"I don't think Willie really cares about her! I've been watching and watching. He's sickened of it all, poor dear boy! I know he's always loved Virginia Denbigh," she added with conviction.

Daniel was silent for a moment, and then he spoke with determination.

"He has no right to care for Virginia or any one now but this poor girl. He's married her, and—" He paused, and added more quietly: "Mother, I think she needs him."

"There! She's got you on her side with those—those fawn eyes of hers!"

Daniel laughed.

"She calls me her enemy," he replied dryly.

Mrs. Carter looked exasperated.

"That's just like her! She's so absurd, so stagy—in a quiet family like ours, too! She makes me hot all over." She shuddered. "I can't forget that dance and those ministers."

"Wasn't it rather biblical, mother?" asked Daniel, and for the first time he laughed happily.

Mrs. Carter rose from her rocking-chair and walked absently to the window, blink-

ing a little as she looked out into the sunshine. She sighed.

"Daniel, do you think I ought to tell your father?"

"Tell him what, mother?"

"About Fanchon and that man behind the church."

"Good Heavens, no!"

"I've always told your father things that—that concerned us all."

"Mother, you know what father would do—he'd storm at William, and William's right on edge now. For Heaven's sake, let them alone—those two, I mean!"

She drew a breath of relief.

"I'd rather not tell," she confessed; "only I felt—I felt as if I should."

"What good would it do?" her son asked her gravely. "It would only make matters worse."

"But, Danny"—she called him Danny sometimes, as she had when he was two years old—"she's Willie's wife, and she's being talked about!"

"Hush!" said Daniel, lifting a warning hand.

Unheard by either of them, the front door had opened and closed. Fanchon crossed the hall lightly, her quick ear catching their voices. She came to the door now and stood there with flashing eyes.

"You were talking about me," she said with her amazing and terrible frankness. "I heard you!"

"Oh, good gracious!" Mrs. Carter fled hastily to the door that opened into the kitchen pantry. "I've got to go and see Miranda," she panted, and went out and shut the door.

Daniel, left alone, rose from his chair. He was flushed, but his eyes twinkled.

"We can't help it, Fanchon," he said amiably. "You're the kind, you know. You don't leave any neutrals in your territory."

She came in and flung her hat down on the table, uncovering her lovely, spirited head. She was dressed in a pale-yellow, clinging garment that seemed to reveal every line of her small figure, and certainly displayed her ankles, in silk stockings as amazing as Emily's.

"You're awfully good people," she said bitterly. "*Mon Dieu!* I'd rather meet some bad ones—who'd let me alone. You're helping to make my husband hate me!"

Daniel's face sobered.

"You're doing William an injustice," he said quietly. "I'm sure he doesn't hate you. I'm very sure, too, that I'm not trying to make him."

She lifted her eyes slowly to his face and scanned it. Then she bit her lip.

"No, I don't think you are," she replied with emphasis; "but your mother does, and so does your father. And there's no need of it—there's enough without that!"

Daniel, who was still standing, leaned against the mantel, supporting himself and watching her gravely, unsmilingly.

"Fanchon," he said gently, "you don't understand. It's been your misfortune to come to us without knowing us. We're just old-fashioned, stodgy people, and you amaze us. You're like a bird of paradise in a chicken-yard. Give us a little time, Fanchon." He paused and then added soberly: "My brother loves you."

She tossed her head, her bosom rising and falling stormily.

"Leigh does!" she cried in a choked voice. "The boy—Leigh!"

"I mean William," said Daniel.

She stared at him, breathing hard.

"You think so? *Voilà!* You haven't heard him quarrel, you haven't seen how he takes your mother's side and your father's side against me! And"—she laughed wildly—"you haven't seen him alone—under the horse-chestnut-tree—with that paragon, Virginia Denbigh!"

Daniel's arm fell from the mantel. He said nothing. He walked slowly to the table and picked up his books and papers. But Fanchon was stinging with anger. She had seen Mrs. Carter's face, she had been treated with cold politeness by Mr. Carter, her whole wild, stormy nature was up in arms. Because she saw it hurt, she struck and struck deeply.

"I tell you she's stealing his heart away from me. *Mais hélas,* it doesn't matter, she's a paragon and I'm a dunce! She—"

Daniel walked past her out of the room without a word. But Fanchon followed him to the door, white with rage.

"*Mon Dieu!* You needn't feel like that!" she cried shrilly. "She says she's sorry for you because you're a cripple."

Daniel did not pause. He heard her, but he went on, toiling slowly upward. He never once looked back at the little creature in the doorway, but went steadily on with a white face and haggard eyes.

(*To be continued in the November number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

A Popular Lady

BY LYDIA M. D. O'NEIL

Illustrated by L. P. Bird

SPRING cutting and branding was all over with and fall work wasn't yet due. Grass was fine, everything prosperous, and the Fourth of July had gone off slow because of three days' wet weather. Tarantula County was flush and happy.

Then along came Miss Sidney Culberson and got a job at the Tarantula Drug-Store, dispensing soda by the glass and boxed bonbons by the pound, and immediately the county was picked up by the ears like a jack-rabbit, given a lingering glance, and tucked away in Miss Culberson's pocket for future reference.

It wasn't anybody's fault; she was simply that kind of a girl. You know 'em—class! You can tell 'em from the common kind as easy as you can pick registered stock out of a bunch of Mexican longhorns. From her arched eyebrows straight down to her Havana-brown pumps, Miss Culberson was nothing but class.

Not that Tarantula hasn't got some classy folks around already, of course—some domestic, and some imported from various States north and east; but here was a new one, a right fetching one, and prefixed " Miss."

Miss Culberson took right from the start. Not too slim or too plump, not too dark or too light, not too shy or yet too forward, she just naturally couldn't help but please anybody, I don't care how critical. The State having gone dry, you had to cool your thirst with soft stuff, anyway; and the rush that developed at the Tarantula Tank beat anything you ever saw even in the way of a gold rush. There wasn't a single man that wasn't thirsty, often or all the time; and besides, they had let themselves run out of tooth-paste, shaving-sticks, turpentine, rubber sponges, nail-clips, and various other necessities of a cowboy's daily life. You know how a puncher will sometimes get a little careless that way.

Miss Culberson was so well-groomed herself, from ears to thumb-nails, that she was a constant reminder to them to shine up a bit, and they shone. They bought everything in the drug emporium that they could use, and some things that they couldn't use. For instance, Search-Me Russell, he bought a perfumery atomizer. Said it might come in handy for spraying them apple-trees he was going to set out after he got himself a place to settle down on. There was no mistake about it, Miss Culberson was a mighty popular girl.

Alex McPherson was the first chap that was lucky enough to get her to go out riding with him; but Miss Culberson was real impartial, and it wasn't long before pretty nearly everybody in the whole bunch had some particular mark of her approval. Dewey Van Valkenburgh learned her how to shoot, Jack Law showed her how to play draw-poker, Pat Reilly caught her a rattlesnake and made her a belt out of its hide, and Search-Me Russell brought her in his whole collection of arrow-heads. And the way she said " thank you " to one and all was more than getting kissed by any other girl.

Everybody knew she'd drop that " Miss " into the discard before Christmas, but who'd be the lucky guy nobody could tell, because she played no favorites that the public could observe. How she could keep stringing several dozen punchers along like that without getting any of 'em sore at her or each other was a marvel; but Miss Culberson done it. As a matter of fact, even the girls liked her, except Hester Hopewell.

Hester had been hoping so long that her hope-chest was filled clean full of tea-towels and doilies and things, years before she had been able to sight anything to anchor her hopes to. Now, at last, she had got herself engaged to Milt Wade, who was fifty and bald-headed, but a good prospect, nevertheless, owning, as he did, eighteen hun-

dred Herefords and the land they grazed on. Milt was just as much smitten with Miss Culberson as Jack Law or any of the rest, only he didn't dare to show it so much, on account of being engaged to Hester; and Hester, having made so much headway, was determined not to lose him, so she couldn't be expected to be overly friendly to a possible rival.

SEARCH-ME RUSSELL BOUGHT A PERFUMERY ATOMIZER

Just about the time that Miss Culberson had finished getting acquainted with all the eligible punchers in the county, a new attraction arrived in the form of a medicine-show traveling overland, with horses as sleek as any gipsy's, a barker that could bark the hide off of the dog star, and a grip full of posters about the most-popular-lady contest.

They threw up a roomy tent on the baseball grounds just back of the depot and stuck placards all over town, saying that the first night's admission was free, but after that it would be two bits, ladies for a dime. And be sure to come, for there'd be singing and dancing and vaudeville and motion-pictures and what not—besides the most-popular-lady contest.

And there was. It was something that the kids around Tarantula might have dreamed about but never expected to come true.

When the show was about half over, the medicine-man took the center of the stage and delivered an oration on popularity.

He was a firm believer in popularity. Often, he said, people were popular without knowing or suspecting it. Only when some great crisis arrived did they realize that thousands did them homage in their hearts and would make any sacrifice for them. He recited some poetry about flowers blushing unseen, and went on to the effect that the world was entitled to see 'em blush. He was in favor of beauty contests and any-

thing else that would permit 'em to blush where folks could get a look at 'em.

But beauty alone, he said, was no true standard of worth. Popularity was what counted, and often the plainest flowers was the most popular. Popularity was the true test of nobility, kindness, gentleness, thoughtfulness, and all the other virtues; and in offering this beautiful tiara to the most popular lady of Tarantula and vicinity, he felt that he was but rewarding honest merit.

That tiara was surely a stunner. As he picked it out of its velvet case and held it up to the light, there wasn't a lady in the audience that didn't breathe a long, long "O-oh!" Even the men gaped at it. It was one big dazzle of light and sparkle and color—a perfect blaze of gold and diamonds. It was sure the prettiest thing that had ever stood on exhibition in Tarantula.

"Some lady," says the medicine-man, "probably some one who is in the audience to-night, will receive this tiara on Saturday evening, as a testimonial of her popularity, of the esteem and affection in which the populace holds her. It is a valuable article. It is worth a small fortune. It is reputed to have belonged to one of the ladies-in-waiting of Marie Antoinette. If there is a jeweler in the audience, will he kindly step forward and examine it, and announce what he believes it to be worth?"

Somebody remembered that Jim Chase had used to run a jewelry-shop in San Antone before he started the Tarantula Bank. Jim, always willing to oblige, took the tiara, hefted it, and looked it over. Gold and pearls and diamonds and an emerald in the center—it was sure a blaze of glory.

"If these stones are genuine," says Jim, "which they certainly appear to be—of course, I can't be positive without testing them—it is worth at least two thousand dollars, maybe more."

NOT TOO SLIM OR TOO PLUMP, NOT TOO DARK OR TOO LIGHT, NOT TOO SHY OR YET TOO FORWARD, MISS CULBERSON TOOK RIGHT FROM THE START

THEY STUCK PLACARDS ALL OVER TOWN, SAYING THAT THE FIRST NIGHT'S ADMISSION WAS FREE, BUT AFTER THAT IT WOULD BE TWO BITS, LADIES FOR A DIME

which will adorn her for years to come, at weddings, at balls, on every festive occasion, and will be handed down to her daughter and her daughter's daughters for numberless generations. Ladies and gents, this is an opportunity that comes but once in a lifetime. Listen!"

We listened.

It was plumb easy—easy as gettin' elected president of the Cattlemen's Association, or the United States, or the League of Nations. All you had to do was to get the most votes.

And there wasn't any Corrupt Practises Act to hinder you. You could buy your votes and your

"A great deal more!" says the medicine-man. "Thank you, sir! Ladies and gents, you have just heard from the lips of your fellow townsman, an expert jeweler, that this tiara is worth at least two thousand dollars. As a matter of fact, it is worth a good deal more. Solid gold, a beautiful filigree design, genuine jewels—a treasure, which will on Saturday evening crown the queenly head of some lady in this audience;

voters without running the risk of having the results contested.

You got five votes with a sack of peanuts and ten with a package of pop-corn; a box of Yucatan Corn Salve brought you twenty and a bottle of Yucatan Liver Pills was twenty-five; and so on, with Yucatan Cold Cream, and Yucatan Hair-Restorer, and Yucatan Stomach Bitters, and Yucatan Seasickness Preventive, and Yucatan Antimalaria, and Yucatan Rheumatism Cure, and various other Yucatanneries that would make you think the whole medical profession had pulled stakes and migrated to Yucatan. The more they cost, the more votes you got. If your check-book would hold out, you would sure get that gorgeous tiara for your best girl.

Now, Tarantula was flush, and the stakes were worth playing for, so Tarantula got right into the game. Billy Brooks and Sleepy Martin went broke the first night, after buying up all the corn-cure, which they have been using as axle-grease ever since; but Bill and Sleepy never did seem to have much money nohow. All the pop-corn and peanuts and liver pills were exhausted by the close of the second night, and Tarantula started in on the high-priced stuff—Yucatan Toilet Soap at fifty cents per cake, and when you got it you thought they had handed you a package of chewing-gum by mistake; and Yucatan Perfume, which was about a dollar and a half per tablespoon; and Yucatan Freckle Cream and Almond Lotion and *et cetera,* which you couldn't even crook your finger at for less than three dollars per crook.

The end of the third night showed three ladies running strong—Sidney Culberson, Hester Hopewell, and a good-looking Mexican girl by the name of Eugenia Manuelita Lucero y Quintana. Eugenia Manuelita led both the others by eight or nine hundred votes, and she looked like a winner. She was being boomed by Seferino Venavides and Trinidad Castro, two prominent stockmen with almost unlimited bank-accounts; but Seferino and Trinidad got to quarreling about Eugenia the next day, and Trinidad stuck a knife into Seferino's shoulder. Seferino went to the hospital at Manzanares and Trinidad went to jail, and before they got things straightened out the show was over.

So that put Eugenia Manuelita out of the running and left the track clear for Sidney Culberson and Hetty Hopewell.

Yes, there was other contests a plenty—pie-eating contests, and nail-driving contests, and who could shave the quickest without drawing any blood, with a safety-razor for a prize; and contests for the little boys, contests for the little girls, and lots of excitement for everybody; but the race for the tiara topped 'em all.

Hetty Hopewell wanted that tiara, and she was determined to get it, even if she bankrupted Milt Wade in the getting of it. It was all she needed to top off that hope-chest. She'd been planning a morning wedding, but she changed it for 8 P.M., and got one of the girls from Tarantula High School to write several advance accounts of the wedding to select from, every one of which contained the words:

> The groom's gift to the bride was a magnificent tiara of diamonds, emeralds, and pearls, once the property of Marie Antoinette.

But somehow Hetty didn't realize that Miss Sidney Culberson had been achieving a considerable amount of popularity in the few weeks she had been among us. Miss Sidney didn't have a hope-chest full of embroidered linens and monogrammed silver, but she had a mighty pleasant smile. She didn't have a rich beau like Milt Wade, but she had a whole train of the most devoted punchers and wranglers in the world. She wasn't an easy girl to kiss, but when you kissed her there wasn't any disappointing reaction, like when you reach for a marshmallow in the dark and bite into a pickle instead.

When the little Mexican beauty got shoved to one side, Hetty Hopewell just fairly thumped herself for joy. That night she outdistanced Miss Culberson by two hundred votes. Next day, however, Jack Law and Pat Reilly played draw-poker all day with anybody that could be got to play with them, either by persuasion or compulsion, and with the results of their clean-up they made Hetty Hopewell shed tears. The medicine-man kept three assistants busy ladling out the stomach bitters and the Yucatan Complexion Lotion, and hauling in the five-dollar bills. And it wasn't only them two, but every impressionable cowboy that Miss Culberson had ever smiled upon, and they was legion.

Even Alex McPherson, who never was much of a ladies' man, sold a span of mules and spent the proceeds buying up Yucatan Hair-Curling Fluid, the accompanying votes

all going to Sidney Culberson. And Dewey Van Valkenburgh, he'd been saving up for a motorcycle, but he dumped every cent into Pat Reilly's hat.

"Spend it for her, Pat," he says. "I'm outshone. I don't know who's a going to get her, but *she's* a going to get that tarara, even if I have to bust open the bank!"

Saturday night found the Yucatan medicine-man sold plumb out of everything except bottled goods, chiefly rheumatism cure and Antimalaria. They were stacked up on the stage, high and wide and thick—at the rates the medicine-man was charging, maybe a thousand dollars' worth. Milt Wade and his bride-to-be sat close up front, Hester smiling confident to her friends and blushing, and looking as proud as if the tiara was already setting on her head. And Miss Culberson was chatting with a bunch of punchers, and joking as unconcerned as if there wasn't any such a thing as a tiara in the whole world.

But if ever a man was worried, it was Pat Reilly. There was no doubt about Miss Culberson's popularity, but her campaign party was hampered by lack of funds. In plain Tarantula lingo, Pat's outfit was about broke. Altogether they dug up two hundred and sixty-some dollars.

"Maybe," says Dewey Van, "if we put up a good front, we can sort of bluff Milt out. He's cautious; notice how he don't buy up more than enough at a time to keep fifty or a hundred votes ahead?"

Jack Law shook his head gloomily.

"Couldn't we think up some way to call him out of the tent?"

"He wouldn't go," says Pat. "I know him, and I know that chessy-cat he's engaged to. Nothing short of kidnaping him would do any good!"

Dewey Van was for kidnaping him, then; but that being liable to result in manslaughter or something, it was likewise voted down.

Just then Dewey Van's partner, Ulysses, comes down from the hotel with a telephone message from Alex McPherson. Alex has sent in word that he has collected a hundred and fifty dollars that some one has been owing him, and borrowed two hundred more from an Indian, and he's coming in to spend it for Sidney as soon as he can get a string on his horse.

Now that was pretty good for Alex, seeing that he never was much of a lady's man, anyhow. Anybody that can collect a three-year-old debt is a daisy, and anybody that can borrow two hundred dollars from an Indian is sure a high-power artist. Dewey Van was jubilant, but Jack Law kept on shaking his head.

"I know them horses of Alex's," he says. "You can't get a string on one of 'em unless you get him in a corner, and Alex hasn't got many corners on his place. That guy that fenced it for him made it pretty near round. He won't get here till it's over, I'm betting!"

Singing and pictures and vaudeville over, the popularity sale began.

Miss Culberson was ahead of Milt Wade's chessy-cat, 'way ahead, but Milt bought up till Hetty was even, and then ahead. Jack Law and Pat Reilly bought by the ten dollars' worth while the money lasted; but Milt bought in fifties, and showed no signs of running short. Dewey Van kept a sharp lookout for McPherson, but Alex evidently wasn't able to catch his horse, for he didn't arrive. And at last Jack was broke, and Pat was down to his last six bits.

"Beat!" whispered Jack. "Oh, great bobtailed mountain-lions, that sweet girl beat by a dust-complexioned last chance like Hester Hopewell! Let me die!"

And then a tall person with a long coat like a preacher's and a soft voice like a con man's slipped up behind Pat Reilly.

"Stranger," he whispered, "you look like an honest man."

"I am, Heaven help me!" answers Pat. "But if I had Milt Wade in a corner now—"

"There's a pickpocket edging up to me," says the stranger. "I'm sure he's a pickpocket—a very naughty-looking person! Will you keep my roll for me till the show's over? When you're ready to return it you'll find me near the entrance."

He winked solemn at Jack Law, and slipped back—but Pat felt something compact and velvety shoved into his hand.

"Miracle of miracles!" says Jack Law. "The medicine-man can take care of that better than you can! Buy 'em up!"

Pat like to split the roof with his yell.

"Mr. Medicine-Man of Yucatan," he howls, "there's a swarm of mosquitoes due about next Christmas, and a stitch in time is worth a pound of cure! Gimme seven hundred dollars' worth of Antimalaria!"

The medicine-man counted 'em out.

"I'm sorry," he says. "There's only six hundred and ninety-five dollars' worth left."

"Oh, thunder!" says Pat. "Keep the change!"

The medicine-man stepped forward with the velvet case.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he says, very impressive, "I have the honor to announce that the most popular lady of Tarantula and vicinity is Miss Sidney Culberson. This valuable tiara is a lasting proof of the devotion of an entire community. Let us have three cheers for Miss Culberson. She is queen of all our hearts to-night!"

And with that—but shucks! You might as well try to describe the Grand Cañon.

II

EARLY the following morning the medicine-man folded his tent and silently slithered away, bearing with him seventeen thousand two hundred and ninety-eight dollars and seventy-five cents in good cow-country currency.

Late Sunday afternoon Miss Culberson got a telegram. Pat Reilly brought it over from the station. It said:

Mother is dead. Come at once.

"I'll get your ticket," says Pat; "and if there's anything else I can do—"

But Sidney threw the telegram in the waste-basket.

"Mother's a nuisance!" she said. "She should have used Yucatan Stomach Bitters before it was too late."

Then she and Pat leaned their heads very close together, and Pat listened while Sidney talked.

Monday brought another message:

Mother is worse. Come at once.

"Too bad!" says Sidney. "Poor ma! They must have used a pulmotor on her; or maybe a stomach-pump. What's worse than being dead, anyhow?"

"Being in love," says Pat promptly, and near got his ears boxed.

"STRANGER, YOU LOOK LIKE AN HONEST MAN; WILL YOU KEEP MY ROLL FOR ME TILL THE SHOW'S OVER?"

Monday afternoon brought one more:

Mother seriously ill and calling for Sidney.

Sidney hummed something about "listen to the call of the jay-bird."

That was all of the telegrams, but on Thursday the medicine-man came rolling in on the train. He wanted to see Sidney Culberson, and he wanted to see her private. Sidney was willing to let him see her, but couldn't allow of any necessity for privacy.

Behind the bar of the Tarantula Drug-

Store she stood, with her hands on her slim hips—and near by was Pat Reilly and Jack Law.

"Well, old comrade of the pleasant past!" she greets him. "What's up? Ma dead again?"

The medicine-man winked and made various other come-along signs, but Sidney wouldn't slide.

"Listen to this," says Sidney. "We're not tenting to-night on the old camp-ground, nor to-morrow night, either. Tarantula has a very superior climate."

"You mean—" gasps the medicine-man. "You mean—"

"You'll have to find another popular lady. You get my meaning exactly. I was married day before yesterday to Mr. Reilly here. He is only a cowboy, but he has a heart of gold!"

"Without the Treasury stamp," says the medicine-man.

Sidney tossed her head.

"He is broke, quite true; he went broke on my account. But you forget, dear brother of mine, that I have some fifteen thousand in the bank, back in Indiana; and we are going to buy a ranch with it."

The medicine-man gasps some more.

"That ty-ara!" he reminds her.

"A reward of merit—a testimonial of my kindness, gentleness, and other virtues, and of the esteem in which I am locally held. Better buy some more Dodgers' near-silverware, deary. That's what we started with, you know—and the ladies fell for it. Though I suppose you could afford another tiara. It wouldn't set you back more than three thousand or so. And thanks, Richard, for having Clarence slip Mr. Reilly that seven hundred. You kept the tiara in the family, anyway!"

The medicine-man was game. He ought to be, considering how generous Tarantula had been. He turned to Pat Reilly.

"Let me congratulate you," he says. "When you married my sister, sir, you married a very clever and accomplished girl—and the most popular lady in seventeen States! She's won that tiara more times than I can remember; and Saturday night was absolutely the first time in our career, sir, that it was necessary for Clarence to come to the rescue with funds. And I understand that it was necessary then only because a gentleman named McPherson had some difficulty in catching his horse. My sister and I have occasionally had a difference of opinion on the question of division of receipts, and I anticipated that she would leave the outfit sooner or later. I meant to make her a present of the tiara when she did, anyway. It's genuine, too, sir—all but the emerald in the center; and it is reputed to have—"

"Can the chatter!" interrupted Sidney. "Your train's due in eight minutes."

The medicine-man went over to the station and took the train back to his outfit. The last we heard of him, he was down in Brown County, Texas, dispensing cosmetics, medicaments, and popularity.

THE ISLE OF DREAMS

If I took shelter to-morrow
Where seas do not break
Harsher than ripples that borrow
The calm of their lake,
I could forget in an hour
The failure of schemes
To keep their promise of power—
Find comfort in dreams.

For in my island of amber,
Where summits of gold
Rival the sun as they clamber,
Themselves aureoled,
Nothing defies me; but, waking,
Would I be proud,
Knowing a lost undertaking
Had left me so cowed?

Richard Butler Glaenzer

During Office Hours

BY MARION McCREA

Illustrated by Will Foster

IN some corner of every properly equipped sky-scraper there is a girldom, a retreat where the masculine foot may never tread, a feminine refuge beside the strenuous, man-made way of modern business. There giggly wrestling-matches are fought; medicines, milk, and raw eggs dutifully swallowed; dance-steps elucidated; complexions hand-tinted and dull-finished; hair, paid for by honest stenographic toil, rearranged and rebuilt upon home-grown substructures.

Seated on every inch of space available —on rockers, couches, window-sills, and one another's laps — an engaging company of off-duty handmaidens of commerce compare knitting methods, give low-toned readings from love-letters, make out-of-court settlements of office disputes, and vivisect, hilariously mimic, consider as to his every peculiarity, from manner of emitting dictation to the contours of his manly figure—the boss. Chiefly used for every other conceivable purpose than that of resting, this retreat is called the rest-room.

That's where your stenographer is, Mr. Business Man, when you want to rush that letter to your branch-office manager off on the Twentieth Century Limited. And it's where your husband's "right hand," the efficient Miss Keypush, spends a few stolen moments, Mrs. Business Man, on days of aches and weariness such as *you* spend in bed.

At the peaceful late-afternoon hour when the mail has been turned in, and a twenty-minute stenographic absence from the office is least likely to be noticed, two maidens, plain of face and efficient in manner, sat in the cozy rest-room on the twentieth floor of the Middlewest Building, rocking and crocheting and chatting.

"Who do you suppose is back in the building, working for my dear society-light former employer?" citrically smiled the plainer of face.

"D'know. Any of our old girls?"

"You guessed it—Fae Fix."

"No! Leave it to that girl to land the softest job in the Middlewest Building. How's she looking? Sportier 'n ever in this season's styles, I bet."

"She probably looks sporty, Miss Froomkin, in a flannel nightgown. It's something about her. She's got her eyebrows trimmed to a hair-line now that somehow gives those Jappy eyes of hers more of a come-hither look than ever. And she's down to about ninety pounds, and wearing a tight jersey-cloth dress to let the world know it."

"Dances herself to death. Never looked as if she'd had sleep enough to give her the pep to drag one of her fifteen-dollar shoes after the other till some time along after lunch, did she?"

"No—and there's a reason, Miss Froomkin, for that after-luncheon pep. I happened to stand close to her one day when she came back an hour late from one of her large luncheon engagements, and she fell all over herself describing to me what a wonderful dessert with brandy sauce she'd had, and immediately asked the office-boy to go out and get her some triplespice gum!"

"Oh, I remember. And the kid pulled a stick of gum out of his pocket, shoved it part way into his mouth, and told her she could have all she could bite off! And she did it. No wonder she was the only girl in the place who could ever get the lazy little imp to manicure her typewriter for her!"

Operating as if at a signal, the speakers twisted their heads around for a glance at the rest-room clock. Two girls sitting on a table-edge straightened up in hopeful readiness to pounce upon the rocking-chairs. The possessors of the squatters' rights turned reassured eyes from the clock and tranquilly resumed the threads of crochet and converse.

"Were you in the office, Miss Froomkin, the time Pa Rosenzweig heard her say

something under her breath because her typewriter-keys stuck; and instead of calling her down, the old idiot stood there shaking all over, and asked if she'd come in and teach him some new 'cuss-voids' some time?"

"Nope. Bet she took him up on it—the old cracked egg!"

"I don't doubt she was perfectly capable. By accident I once heard one of the funny stories he used to entertain her with when he was supposed to be dictating. It was—well, he must have heard it at some stag-party, that's all."

"What was the story?" casually inquired Miss Froomkin.

"Why, about a chorus-girl who went in to buy a hat, and—"

"Oh, I know that one."

Reluctantly, both rockers slowed up.

"Wouldn't I love to see Fae Fix try to get familiar with her *new* employer!" said Miss Teetzel, lingering. "To that young man, Miss Froomkin, his stenographer is something just half a step nearer human than the five or six maids his 'mothah' employs in their celebrated home on the Drive. You know Miss Letitia Copeland, who has her picture in the society pages nearly every week? Well, she used to keep the phone wire hot calling him up when I worked there—after she'd lost out with her Belgian nobleman. Once she and this fellow's mothah came in, and the three of them almost wept because they'd just heard that some boy whose grandad they didn't know all about had got into the fraternity Miss Copeland's kid brother belongs to!"

"Still, you can't tell. A fresh steno like Fix sure has chances—private-office stuff and all that."

"Yes, but you don't know Elwyn Thernauld Voyne."

"Voyne!" repeated Miss Froomkin, straightening interestedly. "Is he a thin, fearfully refined-appearing guy that looks as if he couldn't walk without spats on—that runs a one-horse advertising agency down on the tenth?"

"It's one-man, but not one-horse. He makes money."

"Say, that fellow was up soliciting Pa Rosenzweig for our advertising account last week. I was taking dic, and he apologized in his English accent for interrupting—and that reminded him to tell Pa Rosenzweig about his new steno. He said how rotten her work was, and how he'd dictated a trade-journal ad about some electrical stuff,

"A FRESH STENO LIKE FIX SURE HAS CHANCES—PRIVATE-OFFICE STUFF AND ALL THAT"—

and, honestly, Miss Teetzel, some of the bulls he said she'd made were screams. Voyne got Pa in fine humor with the story, but it didn't get him anything. Pa just gave him that old spiel about how he'd got rich without advertising, and how he never would spend a nickel on those 'greedy mackazine bandits.' Say, that Voyne's sure a classy-looking freak, isn't he? Doesn't look as if he'd buy Miss Fae Fix brandy-sauce desserts or any of the other little things she's used to from office friends who believe in being kind to the workin' girl. Let's go."

From an inert, blanket-covered hump on

the couch behind the crocheters, a symmetrically filled silk stocking shot forth and kicked into Miss Teetzel's lap a glossy, high-heeled pump.

"All right about squaring yourself—just go to the devil, will you, Froomkin?" suggested Miss Fix, over her shoulder, before she slammed herself out of the rest-room and hailed a downward-bound elevator.

II

Down on the tenth floor she flung wide a door marked, in curious lettering, with the name, "Elwyn Thernauld Voyne." She caught up a fashion magazine from her mahogany typewriter-desk in the outer office and noisily opened a door marked "Private."

A pale young man absently raised his head from the long hand which had been supporting it, and dropped his pencil upon an unfinished sketch that lay before him.

"Mr. Voyne," belligerently began Miss Fix, "will you do me a favor? I want to dictate a paragraph to you and see if you can take it down."

—"YES, BUT YOU DON'T KNOW ELWYN THERNAULD VOYNE"

"Hello, girls—having a nice time?"

They jerked about and stared panickally at a slim girl whose narrow, shadowy-lidded eyes laughed lazily at them as she stretched and put on the slipper which Miss Teetzel frozenly returned to her.

With painstaking nonchalance, the two crocheters started speechlessly from the rest-room; but at the door Miss Froomkin turned and stalked back.

"I'm sorry, Fixie—on the level," she stated simply in her matter-of-fact voice. "Call me a backbiting cat, and I won't say a word. And if I can ever do anything to square myself, just let me know—"

"My dear young woman, don't you think you're overstepping the bounds—"

"I don't care whether I'm overstepping the bounds, or bounding over the steps, or getting myself fired, or whatever else I'm doing. I dare you to be a sport and take some dictation from me!"

With the mien of one who humors a maniac, Voyne wonderingly prepared to write.

"Themanikinworagownuv topodepesh madewithetonbolairo antrimdonly withalarj mutheruvpurlbuckle thetunikwazejdwith shurdbandz," rapidly read Miss Fix. "Got that?"

"Yes," replied Voyne.

"You *have?*" snapped Miss Fix. "Let's see!"

"'The manikin,'" she read incredulously from the sheet he handed her, "'wore a gown of *taupe peau de pêche,* made with Eton bolero, and trimmed only with a large mother-of-pearl buckle. The tunic was edged with shirred bands.' Well, I'm stumped!" she finished weakly.

"Now, if you'll explain this astonishing interruption—" frowned Voyne.

"Why, I just thought I could show you," began Miss Fix unhappily, "that a lot of the stuff you bosses dictate—like that electricity thing about titaniums and amperes and things that you gave me yesterday—is just as hard for us stenos to understand as a lot of dressmaking stuff would be for *you.* And then when we go to read our shorthand, it's worse 'n making out a missing-letter puzzle, on the square! I didn't think you'd get a word of this stuff; and then, when you couldn't take it, I was going to say, just like this: 'Well, Mr. Voyne, perhaps next time I make a few little mistakes, you won't go up to Rosenzweig's office and make fun of me, and give his poisony old stenos something to meaou all over the building about!'"

Voyne's sluggishly reddening face wore a nondescript expression. For the first time in his life he was acknowledging to himself that he had done something a bit caddish; he was being addressed as a fellow human being by a servant, and at the same time he could not help noting that said servant was flippantly, exotically, and little-girlishly pretty.

"It's—er—a poor excuse, I know," he began, unbending a trifle. "But I never thought you'd hear of it—of course, I didn't mention my stenographer's name in Rosenzweig's office. I realize how difficult it must be for a young person of your—er—limited education and experience to handle my dictation. Fact is, I exaggerated a good deal in telling Mr. Rosenzweig about some errors you'd made, in an effort to spin an amusing yarn and get him into a good buying humor, you see."

"Oh, *that* was it!" broke in Miss Fix, her long eyes suddenly asmile. "Why, the reason I got so mad was 'cause I thought you'd done it out of just pure meanness! If telling about my mistakes could have helped you get business—"

"But it didn't," confessed Voyne shortly, annoyed at the recollection.

"*You* should care!" commented Miss Fix, seating herself chummily on the edge of Voyne's Chippendale desk, to take full advantage of his first recognition of her unstenographic existence. "Honest, Mr. Voyne, I can't see what you want any more advertising accounts for — with all your money and automobiles and everything!"

"I descended to trying to suit the Rosenzweig idea of a 'good mixer,'" replied Voyne, with an expression indicating mild nausea, "because I happen to want, more than anything else in the world, to get an advertising account entirely through my own efforts—and not," he elucidated half to himself, "because some one wants to encourage Thernauld Voyne's son, or is after a membership in one of my clubs, or because his wife thinks it might lead to an acquaintance with my family. Old Rosenzweig doesn't know anything about me, or my clubs, or about any social set that doesn't play pinocle. And I want his account most particularly, because in place of the horrible line of imitation-bronze 'novelties' he's now making, I can design him some things which will be really beautiful—which I'd itch to write some good magazine advertising for. Like these, for instance."

He held up a sketch, watching her face for its indication of the workings of an untutored mind.

"That's a thermometer, isn't it?" queried Miss Fix, pointing. "What are the other two things?"

"This is a wall-plaque, containing a thermometer and a hygrometer—for registering moisture in the air, you see," he explained. "This is a humidifier — just a graceful water-vessel to be attached to radiators. There ought to be a humidifying set of this kind in every steam-heated room in the

country, to keep the temperature and moisture of the air right, to keep lung-tissues healthy, to prevent influenza, and all that sort of thing. Do you think the set—pretty?"

"Oh, peachy!" enthused Miss Fix. "Didn't Pa—Mr. Rosenzweig like it?"

"I really don't know." Voyne, resuming his seat, gave unmistakable evidence that he desired the interview to end. "I conceived this humidifying-set idea after I saw him last week. I wrote him a letter, which you've probably forgotten, describing the possibilities of the idea, and requesting another interview. He never answered. Now—er—Miss Fix, I hope you've pardoned me for—"

"Oh, goodness, yes!" Miss Fix vehemently assured him, her slant eyes wide. "And I think you have the most wonderful ideas—"

Miss Fix took herself abruptly out of her employer's private office. There was an unfamiliar muscle jerking so hard at one of her eyelids that she was afraid he'd notice. She rubbed a chamois-skin over her suddenly heated face, then ponderingly sat down at her typewriter-desk and reached for the telephone.

"Hello—Rosenzweig & Co.—that you, Sethie?" she greeted, a moment later. "Tell Miss Froomkin that Fae Fix wants to see her down in 1034 right away, will you, cuty-boy?"

Miss Froomkin appeared in an unbelievably short time, having forgotten to remove both her eye-shade and her expression of astonishment at the summons.

"Froomkin," impressively began Miss Fix, "did you mean it when you said you wanted to square yourself with me for that knockfest?"

"Just try me out, kiddo."

"Have you seen anything of a letter, Froomkin, from my boss to your boss, telling about a thermometer thing and asking for a try-out on advertising service?"

"Sure! It came in the same mail with two or three others soliciting our advertising. I put 'em all on the bottom of Pa Rosenzweig's mail-pile, of course, and he gave 'em one look and fed 'em to the waste-basket, as usual."

"Listen, Froomkin," eagerly commanded Miss Fix. "I'm going to fish that letter out of my shorthand notes and type it over, and forge my boss's name to it. Then, if I give it to you, will you put it on the very top of Pa Rosenzweig's bunch of opened mail to-morrow morning, where he'll think it's something terribly important and read it all the way through?"

"Ouch!" ejaculated Miss Froomkin. "I may get a call-down, but I'll do it for you, Fixie." She smiled slowly and turned her eyes toward the closed private-office door. "Working for a raise, or have you got a crush on your new boss, kiddo?" she asked.

"Ever hear how Henry Ford got rich minding his own business?" retorted Miss Fix, beginning a deafening fusillade on her typewriter.

"Well," laughed Miss Froomkin, "after Steve Bateman and all the other good-looking cheerful spenders you've had on your staff, I'll be darned if I can make out what you can see in this guy!"

"I'll be darned if I can either, Froomkin," came a sudden rush of confession from Miss Fix. "But—but, Froomie, you don't suppose I look to him like I do to that old b-battle-ax of a T-Teetzel, do you?"

"For the love o' Mike, kiddo, are you going to turn on the weeps?" cried the amazed Miss Froomkin. "You probably look to your boss like a necessary nuisance, like all the rest of us do. And if you'd traveled the stenography route as long as I have, you'd know that 'Social Register' bosses who play round after business hours with million-dollar beauties like Letitia Copeland aren't going to—"

"Oh, shut up, Froomie! And say, will you help me?"

"I'll try, you little nut."

III

Many a stenographer is truly the partner of her employer's workaday joys and sorrows. The young woman who is paid to remain within listening-distance of her dictator's voice does not possess the home-circle prerogative of giving frank intimation of the desire for a change of subject when bored. He finds her an ideal recipient for confidences as to his business trials and triumphs.

Not so Elwyn Thernauld Voyne. He received the amazing request, next morning, to call immediately upon Benjamin Rosenzweig. Two days later, Benjamin Rosenzweig returned the proof of a humidifier advertisement, bearing his O. K., with written authority to insert the advertise-

ment in two magazines. But Voyne had spoken not another word concerning the new advertising account to his subdued amanuensis.

It was not until that young woman received a thick pile of handwritten sheets to copy, the topmost one of which bore the title, "Plan of Advertising and Selling Campaign for Rosenzweig Novelty Company," that she knew she had airily succeeded in solving the problem that keeps many an erudite member of the ad-writing brethren awake o' nights—that of how to keep your follow-up letters out of the waste-basket.

Ecstatically she telephoned the news to Miss Froomkin.

"Froomie, you old pippin!" she exulted. "It's working! My boss has ground out an advertising plan and layouts for about a million magazine advertisements, and if Pa Rosenzweig only signs up for 'em all—"

"What's it going to get you, kid?" interrupted the dry voice of Miss Froomkin.

"Not a blooming thing, Froomie," acknowledged Miss Fix dreamily, "except—well, he told me one time that he wants Rosenzweig's advertising account more 'n anything else in this world — and I want him to have it, that's all."

Miss Fix heard Miss Froomkin grunt hopelessly and click up her receiver.

"Froomkin's right about the boss," admitted Miss Fix thoughtfully. "Next time I see her I'll tell her so. He's just a stuck-up highbrow who's only noticed once in his life that I'm not just part of the office furniture. He isn't even healthy-looking—and hasn't much pep—and—but—" She half whispered her thoughts into the telephone she had forgotten to disconnect.

The next time Miss Fix saw Miss Froomkin, however, that ordinarily phlegmatic person breezed excitedly into the outer office of Voyne's beautifully appointed suite, holding high a bulky portfolio.

"Kiddo, can you beat it?" she enthused. "We've put it over!"

"Honest, Froomie?"

"Sure! Pa Rosenzweig tried out your boss's humidifier ad in two magazines, and got a bunch of inquiries that tickled him so that he whipped out his fountain pen and signed on every dotted line he found in this stuff! Contract's signed up, kiddo, and the ads and new designs O. K.ed. You and I ought to get a commission!"

"Froomie," cried Miss Fix, "if you ever dare to tell a soul—"

"Oh, I'll keep it under my hat. Speed in now and fire this dope at his nobs—I'm in a hurry. And, say, Pa wants some kind of a receipt for it."

Miss Fix knocked at the door of Voyne's private office. Accustomed to the informal

"I'LL TELL HIM NOTHING OF THE KIND," INTERRUPTED MISS FROOMKIN—

ways of Pa Rosenzweig, Miss Froomkin sauntered after her into the room, the air of which was hazy and odorous with the smoke of Voyne's tiny Russian cigarettes.

"Will you please tell the young woman to wait outside?" ordered Voyne, without looking up, snapping on his desk-lamp.

Unbudging, hands on hips in Irish-come-

dienne fashion, Miss Froomkin formed with soundless lips the ejaculation, "My Gawd!" for Miss Fix's entertainment.

Voyne's eyebrows drew together in annoyance as he sensed the

" that I'll see him to-morrow to discuss a series of follow-up letters. Tell him I've killed his arguments against selling-letters —for after I'd failed in an interview with him to secure a trial order for my advertising service, my letter proved the entering wedge which has resulted in his order for this complete campaign.

—WITH RELISH. "YOUR LETTER DIDN'T 'REACH OUT FROM HIS MASS OF MAIL.' IT REACHED THE WASTE-BASKET"

absence of movement behind him. But by the time he had finished his eager examination of the signed contract, the approved set of advertisements, and plan of campaign, his thin face had taken on a look of gratification that was soul-deep.

" Please tell Mr. Rosenzweig, young woman," he requested in an exhilarated voice, Tell him he must acknowledge that my letter reached out from his mass of mail and wouldn't release him till he'd read it. Tell him I can write letters like that which will reach out of *his* prospective customers' masses of mail—"

" I'll tell him nothing of the kind," interrupted Miss Froomkin with relish. " Your

"IT'S EASY TO FALL FOR BOSSES JUST BECAUSE THEY ARE BOSSES AND HAVE MORE CLASS THAN THE FELLOWS WE MEET ANY PLACE ELSE—"

letter didn't 'reach out from his mass of mail.' It reached the waste-basket. This live young steno of yours made it her business to find out what happened to it, and copied it over again out of her notes. As a special favor to *her*, I put it on top of Mr. Rosenzweig's mail next day, instead of on the bottom with the rest of the soliciting letters. *Of course* your letter made good after he'd read it clear through; about nine out of every ten selling-letters *would* make good if they could get themselves read clear through. Mr. Rosenzweig would read a page copied out of the telephone-book clear through if I put it on the very top of his mail, where I put *your* wonder-letter! Ta-ta, Fixie."

When Miss Froomkin had snatched her receipt and slammed herself out, Voyne slowly reached up and pulled the chain of a wall-lamp which sent its soft brightness directly into the colorful face of Miss Fix.

"I—if your mail's signed," she began, panickally avoiding his odd gaze, "I'll start to—"

"You toy *Carmen!*" he said in a voice that made her catch dizzily at his desk. "Why did you cudgel your little brain plotting to give me a bit of pleasure? Tell me!"

"I—was just interested in the firm's business, of course," explained Miss Fix in hot agony.

He caught her chin in one of his hands

and looked for a long time into the curly-fringed eyes.

"If you hadn't done *this*," he said dreamily, "I could have fought it out. I'd have got myself to discharge you to-morrow—maybe—and have got myself to ask Letitia Copeland to marry me to-morrow—maybe; and probably I'd have been half happy ever after. I don't suppose you can understand, can you, that this little act of yours is the biggest thing that's ever happened to me?"

Miss Fix, with gyrating brain, endeavored to beat a retreat. Voyne caught her hands. His tortoise-rimmed spectacles misted over slightly as he smiled at the bizarre rings, the trembling, and the stains of typewriter-ribbon ink.

"Would it amaze you just a bit," he asked her, "if I were to tell you that at one o'clock this morning I was crazily trying to paint that impudent head of yours, with red buds and a tall, lacy-gold comb in your hair, and swinging earrings? And that for weeks I've been writing innumerable pages by hand because I couldn't dictate them with you in here with me? And that you're going to shock and delight me out of my five senses for the rest of my lifetime? That I'm going to dress you up in all the things I've ever dreamed on you and take you back over every place in the world I've ever been—just to hear your comments in that delightful patois you talk? That you're going to see a dying old Spanish city where I think you were a street-dancer a hundred or two years ago, and my old school-garden in England? And that you're the only person in the world who ever did me a kindness solely and entirely because you cared for me?"

"You're raving!" choked Miss Fix.

"Oh, this isn't a mere case of your boss getting fresh," he elucidated alarmedly. "I'm asking you to marry me, child!"

Miss Fix sat down suddenly. After a speechless moment, she began belligerently to speak.

"You needn't be so terribly sure I got you that business because I cared for you," she announced. "And even if I did, I wouldn't say yes in a hurry, because I'd be afraid it was just because you're my boss. Miss Hosmer, down at the Economy Coal, had an awful crush on *her* boss, and she got over it the minute she quit there and got a new job. And it was the same way with John R. Marsh's steno, and—oh, a lot of other stenos who've told me their troubles up in the rest-room! It's easy to fall for bosses just because they *are* bosses and have more class than the fellows we meet any place else—"

Elwyn Thernauld Voyne laughed as he hadn't laughed since he was a somewhat noisy American boy whom his dissatisfied mother was trying to Anglicize in a Buckinghamshire school for young gentlemen. He stood before her with bar-of-justice mien.

"Now, here's the situation," he began. "It seems extremely likely that any attraction you've ever felt toward me has been altogether due to the glamour cast by my exalted position as your boss. Also, I'm at least ten years older than you. Also, I'm a rather ridiculous, snobbish sort of duffer—as it's been gradually borne in upon me since you came here. And I belong to a family the feminine members of which you will immediately hate. The possibilities seem excellent that you'd be far happier with one of my many young rivals who phone you during business hours. But—I'm much nicer away from the office than in it. All bosses are, I assure you. Won't you 'take a chance'?"

"Not till I've kept company with you for a while outside the office!" declared Miss Fix with dignity.

THE COMING OF AUTUMN

Clothed in blue mist or silvery light,
He passes over vale and height;
And his transforming touch we find
In stealthy frost or whistling wind.

He murmurs low to root and stem,
Breathing a subtle change through them;
And then a spell of love he weaves
Till blushes mantle all the leaves.

William Hamilton Hayne

Light Verse

THE OLD-FASHIONED DOCTOR

OH, what has become—I inquire without levity—
Of all the concoctions that caused us to praise
The family physician, first aid to longevity,
Who looked at our tongues in the ipecac days?

The old mustard poultice—I still feel the burn of it—
The quinin and calomel, boneset and sage;
The loathed castor oil which, in spite of our spurn of it,
Has proven its merits from age unto age.

Lobelia and aloes and hoarhound and liverwort,
The dread belladonna, and sassafras tea,
Poured into our systems for stomach and liver hurt
Upon the advice of this worthy M.D.

He did not decree that he must take a hack at us
Each time we complained of a twinge or an ache,
Then, e'er we recovered, politely come back at us
Presenting a bill that would cause us to quake.

The old ship of health he directed inspiringly
Through oceans of dope with a cargo of pills;
And he merits reward, for he served us untiringly,
Dispensing relief for a legion of ills.

The old-fashioned doc with alleged idiosyncrasies—
What a pity that he must surrender the helm
To those who discovered that ailing appendices
Are sources unfailing of coin of the realm!

Harry J. Williams

THE POPULAR PLAYWRIGHT

FROM early youth I longed to be
A dramatist, and so
At first I wrote a tragedy
Of days of long ago;
And then an allegory to
Uplift the soul of man.
When neither one of these would do,
I forthwith changed my plan.

I wrote a farce called "Petticoats,"
Which had a lengthy run,
For I had found the public dotes
On rather Frenchy fun.

And then "The Corset Cover" came
To scandalize the press;
While "Blue Pajamas" caused my name
To symbolize success.

Since that I've done two shows a year,
All of the selfsame brand,
And still of lingerie we hear
E'en on the one-night stand.
Two companies do "Bath-Robes" now,
And "Nighties" calls for three;
When "B. V. D." comes out, I vow
Some climax you will see!

Harold Seton

DESERTED

YOU'VE gone, with whom I was so tender!
I had tried, as a woman may do,
To help you, small services render,
Make your life with me easy for you.

And you my fond heart were deceiving,
Who my house for another's forsook.
I'll advertise. What's the use grieving?
But it's hard, now, to get a good cook!

Allene Gates

SOLVED AT LAST

I HIED me to a highbrow tea,
And made no preparation
To enter in the learned talk
They use for conversation.
"If forces irresistible
Should change their situation,
And bump into immovable
Productions of creation,
What then would happen to the two?"
With due consideration,
I said I rather guessed that one
Would lose its reputation.

Ruth Jackman Brown

THAT SNAPPY SALUTE

WE heard a plantive doughboy say:
"Along Fifth Avenue I stray,
And folks declare the scene is gay
Enough to suit them;
But not a sight can I espy,
Because I have to keep an eye
On officers, a swarming by,
While I salute them.

"When overseas it seemed worth while
To give salutes with swank and style
And make them snappy; we would smile
And all was happy.
But now here comes a second lieut;
Two colonels are the next *en route;*
A gen—salute, s'lute, s'lute, s'lute, s'lute—
This makes *me* snappy!"

Anna Mathewson

THE ARTIST WIND

WITH much ado
The braggart breeze
Went whistling through
The tops of trees.
He seemed to be
A *sans-souci*
Secessionist.

"Ha, ha!" he laughed,
"Now watch me whisk
With antics daft
My brushes brisk.
My bent is—yes,
I must confess—
Impressionist."

With hue and cry
The braggart breeze
Began to ply
His brush on trees.
Wherever whim
Directed him
He splashed away.

When bits of flame
And dabs of brown
Had spread his fame
Through dale and down,
He proudly eyed
The countryside
And dashed away.

Elias Lieberman

SAILING THE SEAS WITH TOM

DAWN drifting over the hills and the town;
Sheen of the stars on the foam;
Lifting anchor and creaking chain,
And a song of the folk that roam.
Wind of the dawn on my face blown faint
And soft as an Eastern balm;
And it's out and away for a year and a day,
Sailing the seas with Tom!

North, where the seals and the sperm-whales are,
Or south where the dolphins swim,
Or Hawaii-bound for sugar and rice,
'Tis the same to me and him.
He taunts the sea when a storm comes up,
He smiles when her face is calm;
For she's friend or foe, as the winds may blow,
Sailing the seas with Tom!

He knows the harbors of all the earth;
He knows where the great depths are;
He knows the jargon of all the ports;
He names me each separate star.
He knows the ways of the winds and waves,
And the islands of pine and palm;
And it's dreams come true when I'm out on the blue,
Sailing the seas with Tom!

We may cross a liner upon her path,
We may signal a tramp or two;
But the seas are wide and we're all alone—
Tommy and I and the crew.
Alone out there on the great sea's breast,
Facing the storm and calm,
Till west is east and east is west,
Sailing the seas with Tom!

Lydia M. D. O'Neil

THE CHARMS OF MEMORY

("Our school-days are our happiest")

I THOUGHT so, too, and shed a tear
To think of them—to wit:
Those wondrous days of yesterycar
When I the fount of knowledge near
Was privileged to sit.
"My boy," I told my son, "you ne'er
Will be so glad, so free of care."

Alas, last night a dream I had—
A very vivid one;
I was at school again, a lad,
But somehow I did not feel glad
As once I thought I'd done;
For "teacher" put me on my mettle,
And said: "Spell Popocatepetl."

He sent me to the board to do
A sum to twenty places;
And then he asked me if I knew
The Presidents—a boy named Chew
Was making funny faces
Behind his back. He cried: "Begin!"
When some one stuck me with a pin.

At recess I was "it," and ran
Till I was done for quite;
And then a strapping lout called Dan,
As big as many a full-grown man,
Said: "Now we'll have a fight!"
The bell rang then and saved me, but
Dan said: "Well, after school, you mutt!"

When we were in our seats once more,
We had to draw a chicken;
When teacher saw mine he got sore,
And grabbed me by the ear and swore
He'd let me have a lickin'—
I woke up then, but cured am I
Of sighing for the days gone by!

William Wallace Whitelock

THE STAGE

WHAT DOES THE PUBLIC WANT?—AN IMPORTANT QUESTION DISCUSSED BY TWO LEADING PRODUCERS, WITH A SIDE-LIGHT ON SO-CALLED HOODOO THEATERS

By Matthew White, Jr.

WITH the busiest season the country has ever known now under way, the choice of plays has become even more of a problem than picking the actors to appear in them. The latter are, after all, a more or less known quantity, while a new play represents a guess at best.

Of course, such guesses must be based on certain principles in the mind of the guesser. In an effort to gather what these might be, I interviewed two managers as to the theories that guide them in selecting material to place before the American public—one of them a producer who is also a playwright, the other a producer, pure and simple, who has never written a line for the stage in his life.

The first man was Edgar Selwyn. As I entered his handsome office on the top floor of the Selwyn Theater, within sound of the drills excavating for the foundations of the two new houses to be erected for the firm of which he is a member, I could not but call to mind the hungry boy of sixteen, standing outside a restaurant in Chicago, on a snowy winter evening, eying the buns displayed within, and saying dismally to himself:

"My whole life is a failure."

I have already told in this place how he started his career in New York, selling neckties on Fulton Street. My present business with him was to find out what are the qualities in a script that make him think it a good buy.

"Every play must have a plus appeal," he told me. "It must hold you by its story, and, over and above this, there must be something that you can carry away with you. This you can't have unless you give the audience a character to whom they can pin their sympathies. I've just been through an experience—a sad one, too—which will make clear to you what I mean.

"I thought of an idea for a play which seemed to me to be great. I called in Channing Pollock to do it with me—no, it was not 'The Crowded Hour'—and he was equally enthusiastic. We worked together at white heat on the scenario, but on the day this was completed, a horrible conviction came over me. How were we to win sympathy for a man in the uniform of the United States who lost out in the end?

"I imparted my misgivings to Channing, and we determined to test the thing by reading the scenario to a member of the firm and his wife. We did so, and one look at their faces, when I had finished, was enough to show that I was right. We never wrote the play; but the scenario did not go to waste, as we used it for the movie now known on the screen as 'For Better or Worse.'

"Another quality to look for in picking plays is sincerity. New playwrights are more likely to possess this than old ones. Take Pinero's 'The Thunderbolt,' for instance—a really wonderful piece of work, but a drama which never achieved popularity. In my judgment, if Pinero had written it before he became famous, it might have gone over a hit. He would not have kept saying to himself, 'Oh, it wouldn't be expected of me to do this or that.' In the white heat of his enthusiasm he would have gone and done it, just as Bayard Veiller did in 'Within the Law.' Don't understand me to imply that you must catch your playwright young to get the best work out of him. I am using these instances only to illustrate what I mean by sincerity as opposed to self-consciousness."

"Now then," I queried next, "how does the fact of being a playwright yourself, as well as a producer, affect your judgment of your own work?"

"I have answered that in part by what I told you regarding 'For Better or Worse,'" was the reply. "From that you will infer that I am apt to go much slower in accepting a script, even my own, than

BILLIE BURKE, WHO RETURNS TO THE SPEAKING STAGE AS "CÆSAR'S WIFE," IN THE COMEDY OF THAT NAME

From her latest photograph—Copyrighted by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

ELSIE FERGUSON, STILL IN MOTION-PICTURES, A RECENT RELEASE BEING "THE AVALANCHE," BY GERTRUDE ATHERTON

From her latest photograph by Campbell, New York

HELEN BARNES, WHO IS RHY MACDONALD IN THE COMEDY SUCCESS, "THE FIVE MILLION"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

if it wasn't my own money that would be tied up in preparing it for the stage. The average playwright, you know, naturally thinks his product is great because he wrote it. And right here I might mention a big difference between writing a book and a play. In the former, if a reader isn't quite sure about a certain point, he can turn back to it again and refresh his memory. In an acted piece this is impossible. Once the water has flowed under the bridge there is no dipping it up again to put it under the microscope, unless one cares to come the next night—rather an expensive proceeding for the average auditor. The expert playwright must be mindful of this fact, and must see to it that his exposition never puzzles only to annoy. There is a vast difference between the sort of mystery that fascinates and the sort that merely

exasperates. Happenings in a play may be improbable, but must never be impossible. 'Double Exposure' failed because the public wouldn't accept the author's explanation of his situations. Technically I regard it as Hopwood's best play, but this helps not at all if you can't get the people out front to believe in your premises.

"In farce," concluded Mr. Selwyn, "I don't care for the type that is founded on a misunderstanding. I don't consider it good enough for present-day audiences, which demand a higher type of amusement than ever before."

I should add that besides being a playwright and a producer, Mr. Selwyn is also an actor, although he hasn't trod the boards for some five years. He is going back to them, however, during the coming winter in a revival of his own drama, "Pierre of the Plains," based on the novel by Sir Gilbert Parker. He played *Tony*

JANET VELIE, WHO HAS THE NAME-PART IN THE MUSICAL FARCE, "LA-LA-LUCILLE"

From a photograph—Copyrighted by Strauss Peyton Studio, Kansas City

MARGARET IRVING, WHO IS TRÄUMEREI IN THE MELODY NUMBER OF "ZIEGFELD FOLLIES," THE THIRTEENTH IN THE SERIES

From a photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

PAULINE GARON, WITH LEW FIELDS IN THE MUSICAL COMEDY, "A LONELY ROMEO," THAT RAN THE SUMMER THROUGH IN NEW YORK

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

LOUISE GROODY, IN JOHN CORT'S NEW MUSICAL FARCE, "JUST A MINUTE"

From a copyrighted photograph by the Hixon-Connelly Studio, Kansas City

for three years in the original run of Augustus Thomas's "Arizona," and was *José* with Maude Adams in "The Pretty Sister of José."

The second man I asked to tell me about his system of picking plays was George Tyler, head and front of the Liebler Company during its existence, and now associated with Klaw & Erlanger.

"I have no rules to guide me," he began. "I am looking for no indispensable quality in a play except cleanliness—this not from motives of prudery, but simply because the bedroom farce does not interest me. To decide upon a script submitted for my inspection, I first read the play over to find out whether the story holds me. If it doesn't, it's good night for that manuscript. If it does, I go over it a second time with an eye out for the acting possibilities.

"A thing to be remembered is that nowadays, to be accounted a good buy, a play must be one that will make not merely a hit, but a sensation. This is because the competition has become so keen. In New York, for example, with its fifty odd theaters, a production must lift itself well above the common herd to warrant the playgoer in taking the trouble to hunt it up among the mass of theatrical announcements in his newspaper.

"For a manager like myself, without a theater of his own, there is the additional handicap of getting a stage on which to show his wares. To do this your offering

must appeal to the men who control the stages, and in New York, for instance, it is much easier to obtain a theater for a bedroom farce than for a piece of the 'Pollyanna' type. There is a good business reason for this. The near-naughty farce is either a quick sell-out or else an equally rapid-fire fiasco, whereas for the domestic brand of play your audiences must be built up by a more gradual growth.

"A good example of what I mean is provided by our experience with 'Tillie,' last winter. During the first week at the Henry Miller Theater the takings were small; in the second week they increased, and in the third they were still higher. But Mrs. Fiske was clamoring to get in with her new piece, and her personal draft was a matter to be reckoned with in dollars and cents, so 'Tillie' received her walking-papers.

"But here is what happened. I turned my attention to Chicago, and picked a house there, the Blackstone, from which I was sure of not being ousted, as it had the reputation of being a hoodoo. Well, 'Tillie' not only broke the hoodoo, but ran there for nineteen weeks, clear to the end of June.

"It was in Chicago, by the way, that I first brought out 'Disraeli,' and played it for a month to receipts of only three thousand dollars a week; but it was building up audiences for the future, and eventually became a big money-earner, not only in the Lake City, but, as you know, in New York the following season. This business of being afraid of certain theaters because they are supposed to be unlucky is all nonsense. I'll guarantee to make even the Gaiety a hoodoo house by persistently booking poor plays in it."

"And now, Mr. Tyler, as my final question," I asked him, "to which of the several plays you are now planning to produce do you pin the most faith?"

"To 'A Young Man's Fancy,' a frankly fantastic piece by a new writer, John T. McIntyre, who has never had anything on the stage before."

This is in line with what Mr. Tyler, back in 1913, told an interviewer who wanted to know why producers do not encourage youngsters who are trying to write plays. It will be interesting to watch what happens to "A Young Man's Fancy," in view of Mr. Tyler's rosy hopes for it.

He was once connected, by the way, with a theater which, although it is the finest in New York, has come to possess a hoodoo reputation. I refer to the Century, which the Lieblers took over when its career as the New Theater came to an inglorious end—a disaster which I have never ceased to regret.

It would seem as if its location must have something to do with the persistent handicap that appears to hover over the fortunes of this handsome and roomy building. When Ziegfeld and Dillingham associated themselves in its management, about three years ago, with the idea of presenting high-class spectacle on the order of the Follies, success seemed assured. "The Century Girl" did manage to weather a season, but the next winter "Miss 1917" succumbed long before snow ceased to fly. And yet its book was by that clever pair, Bolton and Wodehouse, with music by Victor Herbert and Jerome Kern, and scenes by Urban, while Lew Fields, Cecil Lean, George White, Harry Kelly, Ann Pennington, Bessie McCoy, Brice and King, and Irene Castle were in the cast. Last summer, several *revues* not nearly so elaborate made money in the Forty-Second Street district, with strong opposition right in their own neighborhood.

Perhaps this reveals the secret of the Century's fiasco even under Ziegfeld's magic touch. It is in too isolated a spot. Crowds seem to prefer to flock with other crowds. A press-agent remarked to me the other day, when I mentioned two theaters which his firm is putting up in a block already supplied with nearly a dozen:

"The best location for a new play is next door to a rousing hit, and the more theaters in a block the bigger chance that one or more of them will house a turn-away success that will help swell the audiences for the other shows near by."

The Century has the finest location in New York from an artistic point of view, with a frontage on Central Park affording a wide vista to show off its architectural beauties, but the dark stretches of the park empty no disappointed throngs from sold-out box-offices to console themselves with whatever may be offered across the street.

But the right play can overcome even the apparent hoodoo of the wrong location. This latter handicap was diagnosed as the trouble with the Blackstone in Chicago, the house lying outside the Loop; and I am confidently expecting that the demon will

MABEL WITHEE, ONE OF THE ATTRACTIVE PRINCIPALS WITH GEORGE WHITE IN HIS "SCANDALS OF 1919"

From a photograph by White, New York

RENEE ADORÉE, IN "OH, WHAT A GIRL!" ONE OF THE MANY MUSICAL SHOWS THAT MADE THE PAST SUMMER NOTABLE IN NEW YORK THEATERLAND

From a photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

be exorcised from " the world's most beautiful playhouse " right here in New York. Messrs. Comstock & Gest, who now control its fortunes, have booked two gorgeous imported spectacles — " Aphrodite," from Paris, and " Mecca," from London.

HOW THREE PLAYERS BROKE IN

Louise Groody had to play a waiting game even after she secured her first eagerly awaited chance in musical comedy. Born and raised on a cattle-ranch in Texas, she early attracted attention by her dancing at ranchers' parties, and then, bursting with ambition to secure bigger audiences, she came to New York, the Mecca of all Thespians' hopes. For a time she rapped in vain on the stage doors. None of them would open to her; so she turned to the cabarets, where she secured a chance to show what she could do and a wage to live on while she waited for opportunity to knock. At last she felt sure she heard the welcome summons when she got a chance in a musical piece at the New Amsterdam, " Around the Map." This, however, proved to be one of the very few unsuccessful pieces at that usually lucky house, and Miss Groody was soon minus a job.

Refusing to be discouraged, she went back to the cabarets and her waiting again until Henry W. Savage chanced to see her and offered her a part in " Toot Toot." Her work therein attracted the attention of John Cort, who secured her for the soubrette rôle in " Fiddlers Three." In this she played all last season with such success that Mr. Cort made her one of his earliest acquisitions for " Just a Minute," the successor to " Listen Lester."

The most astounding episode in the career of Janet Velie, another musical-comedy principal whose picture appears this month, was her turning down of an important part in " Have a Heart," in order to gain more experience as a chorus-girl. This was what she had been in a stock company in her native town, Denver, until she decided to try her fortunes in New York. Within two weeks of her arrival she had landed a rôle in " The Only Girl," but she decided to become a show-girl in " Oh, Lady, Lady!" for the sake of the training, before venturing to climb farther up the ladder.

She got her reward, the summer before last, in the shape of a chance to do the office clerk in " The Kiss Burglar," after which she went out in Edith Day's place as the feminine lead in " Going Up." Now she has the corresponding part in " La-La-Lucille," with the additional advantage of having been able to read what the New York reviewers thought of her—an experience that seldom falls to the lot of players unless they participate in the show's Broadway *première*.

Which reminds me of a clever young actor I discovered in Henry Hull's place on a chance second visit to " Thirty-Nine East." Sidney Blackmer's name was quite unknown to me, yet he played the leading part with such sincerity of touch and nice adjustments of the light and shade in a by no means easy rôle, that I was minded to find out where he came from.

I sought him out and discovered him to be a North Carolinian, with a more recent residence in Baltimore. Starting out to study law, as have so many actors before him, he discovered such strong leanings stageward that he abandoned everything, came to New York, and put in eight trying months dogging the offices of managers whom he was seldom able to see, and eking out his existence by chance jobs filling in with the crowds at movie studios.

At last, when he did land a real part—with Winthrop Ames in " The Morris Dance "—the piece failed, and he had his hunt to start all over again. But now he had some experience back of him, and he obtained a lot more with the Ben Greet Players. This secured him the opportunity to follow Calvin Thomas in " The Thirteenth Chair," after which came the war, taking him first to France, and then back again to train other men to go. Still under twenty-five, here is a young man worth keeping an eye on.

THE NEW SEASON'S THIRD PLAY

A corking game of guess is derivable from " The Crimson Alibi," the mystery murder melodrama devised by George Broadhurst after the story of the same name by Octavus Roy Cohen, which ran as a serial in one of our magazines, the *All-Story*. The piece is played in four acts and nine scenes, the last of them being the most thrilling thing of the sort that I have seen in a long while. Lillian Trimble Bradley staged the play—no sinecure of a job with a story of this sort, which flits from pillar to post at a pace with which it would seem only the movies could keep up.

Brokers in Adventure*

A ROMANCE OF LIGHTEST FIFTH AVENUE AND DARKEST AFRICA

By George Agnew Chamberlain

Author of "Home," "Taxi," "White Man," etc.

XVII

THE stillness of that camp was more than a mere factor—it was an element, like sea air, or heat, or cold. It seized upon all who came within its aura, not violently, but with the slow, sure grip of a narcotic. Even the natives seemed to be under its spell, and withdrew in groups to the open plain before they gave way to their accustomed noisy garrulity. They welcomed the time of loafing, especially since Rordon's powers of organization provided them daily with at least a modicum of food.

Every morning three hunters were sent out with three cartridges each; other men were detailed to construct and use a large fish-seine; still others were sent into the surrounding country with a few handfuls of beads and other trinkets saved to the stock of bakshish, to barter for sweet potatoes, manioc, monkey-nuts, and mealies—the total vegetable production known to the African of the east coast. The expedition was mercifully safe from the most terrifying of deprivations through its still large supply of coarse salt, originally intended only for curing purposes.

The foraging parties gave Rordon the most concern. He invariably sent them out in charge of one of the Swahilis, who carried the bartering trinkets, but he knew that, being part of a duly constituted *impi*, the boys would resent paying if they ever felt themselves strong enough for outright robbery and rapine under arms. The contingency was one that might any day bring down on the camp commensurate retribution. At the same time, he felt that Harlow's or his own absence, should they accompany the foragers, might lead to some even more serious complication. Watchers were stationed both by day and by night at outlying points of vantage from which they could easily transmit an alarm.

The camp stood on a long, shady elevation directly above the river, but almost cut off from the mainland by two swampy indentations and a hollow. It was an ideal position to defend, and consequently it inspired a feeling of security which deepened from day to day. Time did not hang heavily on the hands of the idle white party. In the first place they were bone-weary; in the second Merton's condition distracted and held their attention.

There is no torture short of death from which the body cannot recover and reconstruct itself, partially if not wholly; but there are indignities coupled with physical outrage from which the spirit of man can never arise and walk, save along an unfleshly path. Of this nature had been Merton's sufferings, and Rordon, at least, would have felt no surprise had he simply succumbed to the silence within and about him without ever giving his friends or their solicitude vocal recognition of any kind.

In the shadow of his lean-to, walled on three sides, widely open toward the river, the sick man sat propped by pillows in the one long hammock-chair left to the safari. His eyes were almost constantly closed, his thin lips fixed in the enigmatical twisted smile which had so shocked and depressed his sister. He was a small man, on the verge of middle age, thin and wiry, and growing thinner every day, because food no longer interested him. A single tradition clung to him—he insisted on shaving every morning.

Late one afternoon, as the girls, with Rordon and Harlow, were sipping hot water tinged with tea, and striving to fight

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off little devils of depression, Merton's voice came to them and startled them into instant expectancy. He had called in a tone which none of them ever had heard, except Miss Brunt. She sprang at once to her feet, raised one hand to a fluttering breast, and stood listening intently, her face the sudden abiding-place of hope.

"Mary," called Merton again, "why don't you all come here to have your tea with me?"

Mary turned her big blue eyes, brimming with happy tears, on her companions.

"Frank wants us to have our tea with him," she said in courteous invitation; and to Harlow at least there was that in her throaty voice which proclaimed her full heart the throne of all the gifts in the hand of God.

They gathered about the chair of a new Merton. His eyes were wide open, his lips still smiled with a twist, but in both eyes and smile there was the saving grace of a kindliness that once more recognized man's temporary affinity to man.

"Sit down, you people," he said. "No. No tea for me."

His eyes wandered for a moment across the silent, slow-moving waters of the river.

"I have been taking an inventory of my life," he continued presently, "and of the life of the world. It has occupied me for some time. My ways have been the ways of peace, like this river; I have crawled contentedly among insects for the good of mankind. These last few weeks constitute my only high adventure. They have opened the door of the cage. Presently I shall no longer wonder, with the wisest of ancient men, over the way of an eagle in the air."

Rordon, Harlow, and the two girls grasped the full meaning of his words with varying deliberation. Miss Brunt was the last to accept their true import. She arose, and went to kneel at his side and throw her arms across his knees.

"Frank," she said, smiling into his eyes, "you're not going; you've just this minute come back to me."

Merton looked at her a little wistfully and put out one hand to touch her hair.

"How beautiful you are, Mary," he said, "and how bravely you've stood the gaff of these days! I always think of courage as having a smiling face—like yours. There's just one great pride left to me, and that is my assurance that your stanch spirit will always look trouble, hardship, pain, and death in the eye and still smile."

"Oh, Frank!" gasped the girl, her face working pitifully in its effort to meet his exorbitant command. Her eyes held their smile through tears, but her tremulous lips were out of control. She rose quickly to her feet. "You'll excuse me, won't you—just for a minute?"

She swept hastily out of the lean-to. Harlow slipped after and followed her across the camp to the last big tree. Against it she threw her arms, dropped her face upon them, and gave way to the sobs she had been stifling.

Harlow went to her silently and slowly. Without saying a word he took her by the shoulders and drew her toward him. Mary turned, threw her arms around his neck, and clung to him with the frank and trustful gesture of a frightened and hard-pressed child.

In that moment there came to Harlow the realization of an unasking love far beyond his previous conception—a love that transpasses bodily limits and hovers like a halo, divinely illumined, high above mere sensuous affection and affinity. The slender young body in his arms, suddenly immeasurably precious, was quivering from the shock of each rending sob. He held it close and closer; he had seen women cry, but never like this. The pounding of Mary's heart frightened him.

"Molly," he begged. "Please, Molly. Please don't!"

Almost immediately she checked herself, but not completely. She drew two or three whimpering sighs and then threw back her head. Harlow found her face, smudged and wet as it was, the most winsome, the most beautiful and appealing thing that ever light of day shone on. He crushed her to him in a desperate fear that should she free herself he would lose her forever. She put her hands on his shoulders and forced him to meet her limpid eyes. They were like blue sky fresh-washed after storm.

"Charlie," she said, "you've been wonderful all these weeks. Don't spoil it, will you?"

He stared at her dumbly, shook his head, and freed her. Together, and hand in hand, like children, they walked back to the lean-to. Mary made no effort to hide the signs of her cry; she had an intuitive

confidence in the power of her smile either to nullify the smudges or make them its allies.

There was silence in the lean-to when they returned, but it was a comfortable silence with a healing quality. Merton was the first to break it; indeed, none else of the group would have ventured.

"And now," he said, "the life of the world. You are all younger than I, and, except for Mary, who is after all only a baby, you have the American view-point, whose main characteristic is the easy simplicity and straightforwardness of youth. I'll explain in a minute. The outlook of nations on the life of the world is through the windows of their own particular history. Europe is a wood of old and twisted oaks; America is the straight sapling, the smooth, erect tree of a second-growth forest. Is that clear?"

Rordon nodded, for it was at him that Merton directed his glance.

"Well," he continued, "I am of Europe, I am imbued with its involuted fiber. My life has followed the devious channels of its grain; it has been one of the millions of existences which aimed at immediate usefulness, but knew all the time that they were no more than the tiny veins of sap in the parent tree. England is no sapling; it cannot bend. That is why we've been walking in shadow for forty years, afraid of a bugaboo that you Americans couldn't even conceive. Storm to us is not merely storm, but the long torment of a rooted resistance that cannot yield except to utter ruin."

Merton read the expressions in the faces about him. Mary was thinking least of what he said; she was basking in the bitter-sweet joy of repossession. Miss Hume was curious but puzzled; Harlow, true to the American characteristic which Merton had so graphically illustrated, was frankly skeptical. Only Rordon seemed to catch and harbor the full significance and intention of Merton's words.

"You feel," he said, "that this is no passing tornado; that lightning has struck and will strike again."

"Not lightning," qualified Merton. "An earthquake, an eruption which will twist every stratum of humanity and weld the bodies of nations into fantastic and tortured shapes. You are all young; I believe that your youth alone will carry you out of this little mess which weighs so heavily on us now, and which assumes the proportions of a desperate adventure. But when you get out, which I confidently expect you will do once you're free of me as a shackle, you will find a riven and deafened world, where none will think of turning to hear the tinkle of your insignificant experience.

"Harlow doesn't believe that," he continued, his smile deepening in kindliness. "He thinks that my mind is wandering. So it is. It was cut loose from my body under torture, and has been wandering at will over the face of the earth. Three months ago I was ready to jeer at all clairvoyants, seers, and prophets, although I know that the world's greatest blunders have lain in failing to recognize that every prophet is an alarmist only until his prediction comes true. But to-day—I only know that I can see nations, one after another, tumbling into the funnel of war. It isn't a vision; it's consciousness of a stark fact."

His eyes wandered from the group about him and across the river into the high distance.

"That isn't a prediction," he went on, "except in the sense that I see what your ignorance of what is happening obscures; but I *can* prophesy, and I will. My friends, I would like to send through you a message to England. It is this—that the age of crawling things is past, and the day is close at hand when not only in spirit, but in flesh, man shall know the way of an eagle in the air."

"Do you mean," interrupted Harlow, "that you think this war, if there is a war, will last long enough to make the airplane a practical factor?"

Merton's smile deepened.

"Harlow," he answered, "I know it. I don't have to waste breath in persuading you, for you will see it soon with your own eyes."

"What do you mean, soon?" asked Harlow.

Merton turned grave.

"I mean in a period of weeks—at most months. Jules Verne and Wells," he added thoughtfully, "visionaries once; to-day faint realists of vulgar facts who released copy for publication a little ahead of science."

He glanced around to see if he was carrying his hearers along with him, and then continued:

"The hidden ways beneath the sea repel me. I have a cleaner, brighter hope for England and the nations with which she will inevitably be alined. England, murky England, is a land of light. I don't appeal to you, Harlow, because you are still restricted by the limits of your national vision. But Rordon here—he knows. The record of England during the nineteenth century will startle the perceptions of awakened men until the last page of history is turned. She is not perfect, God bless her, but she has acquired through patience a vaster conception of freedom by government than has any other nation. Her record is more than a record—it is the foundation for the hour of her need, carrying a tower from which breaks to-day a standard around which all her sons will gather from the ends of the earth—the standard of a conscious and individual liberty. Rordon, you know it?"

Rordon answered the appeal instantly.

"I have followed the Union Jack around the globe," he said. "Under its wing oppression is never more than a memory. Even in Ireland, Merton," he added, smiling, "that orange and green Siamese twin among the peoples of the earth. I believe you would give her anything under the sun of policy if only her dual throat would screech but once in unison."

"Where England has failed, men will fail her," Merton answered; "but from those vast patches of the globe where her long justice is beloved will come hordes of white, yellow, brown, and black men, to stand shoulder to shoulder for Britain's preservation—not for Britain's sake, but because she is a broad and benign institution in the world's progress."

He dismissed the vexed problem interpolated by Rordon with a gesture, as if his mind were an arrow in flight incapable of deflection from its high course.

"I said," he continued, "that Verne and Wells released two new mastering forces to publicity before science had had time to establish them. This war—you youngsters—you will see what you shall see." His fargazing eyes filled with tears. "The day of the eagle," he murmured, "a day when young men shall become Icarian gods and die half-way to heaven in the thin, clean air of the cerulean blue."

With that burst of prevision he became inexorably silent, detached. The group broke up, to regather presently, all but the sick man, for the evening meal. After it Rordon and Miss Hume wandered off together to gain a wider view under the soft light of the rising full moon.

"How peaceful is this place to-night," said the girl, her eyes sweeping the scene, clear-cut in opposing scapes of black and white. "Flange, do you believe all that—all the things that Mr. Merton said?"

Rordon put his hands on her shoulders and looked her squarely in the eyes. He felt a sudden strong companionship for her a new reliance on her strength and understanding.

"Every word," he answered. "Every word, and more."

"Why, Flange," said Miss Hume, "you're trembling!"

"Trembling?" repeated Rordon. "Yes I'm trembling—to get back. Nell, for years I've been wondering if an age of men would come again in time for me. Well, it's come."

"An age of men!" said Miss Hume, her eyes wandering from his. "I think I was hunting for it—waiting for it—in a way myself. Flange," she added, turning so that his hands fell from her shoulders, "are you staying on here on account of Mr. Merton?"

He nodded.

"How long will it be?"

"Only days now," said Rordon.

"Poor Molly!" said Miss Hume.

She took hold of his arm and urged him back toward the camp. She felt that in this quiet quarter of an hour alone with him when so little had been openly said, she had yet penetrated farther than ever before into his inner life, and had become, however transiently, a part of its web. She knew her own limitations, and the fear that a lapse from absolute sincerity might break the frank communion led her to end an interview which Rordon would have been willing to continue. Never before had he felt so safe in proximity to her beauty—never before had it so lacked the element of attack.

Late the following afternoon the group was once more gathered about Merton's chair, when the equanimity of its talk and mood was suddenly shattered by the appearance of Abdul, blood-stained from head to foot from a gash on the forehead and a bullet-wound in the arm.

"Master!" he gasped, his small eyes inordinately wide and fixed on Rordon to the

exclusion of all else. "An *impi*—a great *impi* with M'sungos at the head!"

Rordon leaped to his feet, hustled the blabbing bearer of ill news out of the lean-to and away. Harlow and the two girls stared at each other, wordless, and for the moment swept out of the reach of reasoning. Merton alone was calm.

"Molly," he said pleasantly to Miss Brunt, "will you fetch my medicine-case?"

She thought he was trying to distract and calm her, and, feeling an impulse of added love for his thoughtfulness, she hurried to comply with his request. Merton opened with steady hands the case which she set in his lap, took out a small vial and a hypodermic needle, filled the needle, and quietly gave himself an injection.

"Why, Frank!" exclaimed Miss Brunt, "that's the very first time I ever saw you use the needle on anybody without cleansing with alcohol!"

"The first and last, my dear," said Merton with a radiant smile.

Rordon stepped into the lean-to. His quick eyes seized instantly the details of the scene.

"That won't be necessary, Merton," he said, his square jaw setting. "Why, man, you're such a trifle of weight that I could carry you strapped to my back and never know it."

"What do you mean?" asked Mary, rising slowly to her feet, her eyes widening with incipient horror.

"Mary!" said Merton in a low, firm voice, as if to recall her to herself. He turned to Rordon. "Too late, old man. I'm glad you and I didn't have to fight it out."

"Too late!" gasped Rordon. "Why, I haven't been away from you five minutes—not three!" His voice steadied. "Merton, what's the antidote? Quick now, tell me, and no fooling!"

"The antidote?" said Merton, still smiling. "There is none—none short of the eternal solvent."

"Oh!" cried Miss Brunt. "While we were here—I brought it to you—you asked me to bring it to you—oh, Frank! While we looked on—"

"Mary," said Merton, "come here. I've only got a minute—a few minutes. I want to touch you."

She knelt at his side and buried her face in his lap. He laid his thin hand on her golden head and caressed it gently. Without raising his eyes from its soft glory, he continued:

"Harlow, there are things I want to say to you about Mary, but nothing that all the world can't hear. Mary is more than a good girl; she is one of those rare women in whom is concreted the trinity of the quality of mercy—faith, hope, and charity. She is not perfect in any narrow sense; she would sin generously where others would be saved by the hoary principles that stand on the firm base of self-interest. She has only one absolute perfection, and it is her weakness—a boundless charity. A man might murder her faith, her hope might die by long deferment, but her abnegation in the face of life will know no end. If you realize that and still dare to take her, you do it under the vigilance of God, from whom she came as a sign to at least one doubting cynic."

"Frank!" gasped Miss Brunt, raising a crimson face, "he—he hasn't asked me!"

"Hasn't he?" said Merton with a low laugh. "Well, when you get to Zomba, look up the good old padre and tell him I said it was all right."

Harlow stepped forward, dropped beside the chair opposite Mary, and caught both her hands across Merton's lap. His face was quite pale.

"Molly," he said, "it's true. I haven't asked you, and I'll tell you why. Because, from the first moment I saw you, you have been to me the warm flame before the altar of desire, a vestal sanctuary to which no man could rush with his sins fresh upon him. Oh, Molly, I do love you! I love you for your shy beauty, for your courage, for your tears, for the light that always shines through them, for your smile that never dies."

"Hush, Charlie," begged Mary, struggling to release her hands.

"I love you," continued Harlow, "for your voice, because it's like a deep brook flowing in the shade of autumn trees."

"Oh, Charlie!" cried Miss Hume, throwing up her head. "Oh, please!"

"I love you because you are the breath of flowers, turned loose to wander," continued Harlow, as serene as if he stood at last in complete isolation with the woman who had dominated him body and soul through many silent weeks. "I love you because, within the depths of your blue eyes, sin, death, and life eternal are merely children at play."

He dropped his face into her hands, which turned to receive it as if impelled by the quality of mercy which Merton had so deftly defined. Miss Hume drew a deep and quivering sigh; Rordon stared in unbelieving wonder; Merton closed his eyes.

XVIII

"PLEASE go and eat, all of you, and come back as soon as you've finished."

Merton spoke, and it was a command.

They went reluctantly to supper, but Harlow was late in coming to the table. Some errand had taken him to his hut, where they could hear him rummaging among his effects. He came to them with his hands behind his back, and stood awkwardly at a little distance from the improvised table.

Rordon was under a great nervous strain. Abdul's encounter with the hostile *impi* had taken place many miles from camp. According to his account, every native in the foraging party under his command had been killed. He believed that his escape had been unnoted, but owing to the length of time the safari had been living on the surrounding country, Rordon realized it was inevitable that the enemy should soon learn of its whereabouts. He also knew that Merton had dismissed the party because he wished to die alone.

As a consequence, Rordon spoke to Harlow with unusual asperity.

"Sit down," he ordered. "Do you think this is a time for horse-play?"

Harlow appeared not to have heard; his eyes were fixed on Mary's.

"Are we engaged?" he asked.

Mary blushed, and laughed deep in her throat—a laugh that was on the verge of tears.

"Yes, dear," she said; "but please sit down."

Harlow brought his hands from behind his back and solemnly placed before her a clock—a boudoir clock bound in bright red morocco. It was ticking bravely, and was surely the most incongruous sight that ever those far wilds had beheld.

"I haven't anything else to give you," he said. "It's for you."

"The clock!" cried Miss Hume. "The foolish clock!"

"Great balls of sweat!" exclaimed Mr. Rordon. "Charlie, have you been lugging that silly thing ever since we left New York?"

Harlow shifted his eyes for one instant from Mary's.

"Oh, no," he replied sweetly to Rordon. "I—I sent for it."

Miss Brunt arose, swept around the table, and threw her arms about Harlow's neck.

"Don't mind them, Charlie," she murmured. "It isn't a silly thing. I love it already because you have had it so long. And I love you, too, dear!"

He kissed her.

Ten minutes later Miss Brunt had finished her hasty meal and jumped up to return to Merton. Rordon caught his breath and held it.

The girl came back smiling.

"Frank is asleep;" she said.

"Is he?" said Rordon, as he arose to go to the lean-to.

He came back presently and whispered to Harlow; then he drew Miss Hume aside.

"Is it finished?" she asked.

He nodded.

"Never did a blow fall more softly. Helen, Merton was a great man, but a greater spirit. Think of his instant sacrifice when he knew that he might become a burden fatal to us all! I would like to go to God as cleanly as that."

They buried him deep, with a great tree for a monument and cover, close to the bank of the peaceful river. As they laid his wasted body away, Rordon stood erect in a shaft of moonlight and began to recite long passages from the burial service. Miss Brunt took it dumbly and as a matter of course, but Harlow and Miss Hume were astounded at discovering a vein in Rordon so foreign to what they had known of his character.

He did not know the entire service by heart—occasionally there were gaps, occasionally long pauses—but the remarkable thing was that these breaks did not embarrass him in the slightest, though they brought a frown of concentration to his forehead. Too sincere to be self-conscious, he repeated in a clear voice those passages which by their supernal beauty had been imprinted on his own mind, and which for the same reason were most familiar to his hearers.

The service over, he became, by what seemed a kaleidoscopic change, the old Rordon, quick in decision, clear in command, exuding energy as if handing around a bracing tot of rum. By ten o'clock the safari

was lined up and ready to go; by eleven it had reached the nearest ford and taken to the water, cold under the full moon. The girls were each carried across by two of the most stalwart of the blacks walking shoulder to shoulder. Miss Hume trailed her hand.

"Why," she exclaimed, "how cold the water is!"

Rordon's voice came to her from so near that it startled her; she turned her head and found him riding the neck of a black and placidly filling his pipe.

"A river in the tropics is ten degrees colder under a full moon than at other times," he remarked. "Didn't you know that?"

"Why should I?" asked Miss Hume.

Rordon did not answer, but when they reached the farther shore and took up the march again, he walked at her shoulder.

"Flange," she said presently, glancing back at him, "will you let me ask you something?"

"Go ahead," said Rordon.

"Where on earth did you learn the words of the burial service, and where did you get the nerve—"

Rordon interrupted her with a chuckle.

"I get you," he said. "It must have given you and Charlie a bit of a shock. I never thought of it at the moment, and I'll tell you why, Nell. After you've heard a dozen rough-necks read that service—a drunken beach-comber once, another time a black stevedore—you can't get nervous over doing it yourself. We outlying men—we've done it, heard it, so often. Rough men," he added quietly, "are simple at heart. They are afraid of trifles and women sometimes, but never of the eternal verities."

His words silenced Miss Hume. She found in them an answer to another question she might have asked, an explanation of how it was that Rordon could turn away light-hearted from the grave of a friend. She saw that it was because he received Merton into his company of "outlying" men who are afraid of trifles—and women—but who go quietly to hobnob with the spheres of heaven.

As the days passed, silences grew longer and longer between members of the safari, which, compared with its palmy days, had become a sadly bedraggled company. The Swahilis were in tatters which verged on immodesty, and the white members of the expedition had but one remaining source of merriment—to look at each other was to laugh. Of the natives but few were left. Once they realized that they had indeed passed the Rovuma, they began to desert by twos and threes and make for home. Rordon did not stop them; he was glad to see them go.

After three weeks' trek through heart-breaking country, the expedition struck the Lujenda River at an insignificant kraal called Mwembe. At this spot the last of the carriers deserted, and as a result Rordon was forced to curb his impatience and call a halt until new men could be enlisted. He blamed himself for so losing his grip on the safari that he had not the few carriers necessary to see him through to Zomba. He had, it is true, been lavish in promises of extra pay to those who remained faithful the longest; but toward the last they surveyed what was left of a once royal equipment, and philosophically decided that the destitute M'sungo was either mad or a liar—probably the latter.

Besides having to fight against the element of time, Rordon had to meet the fact that while a well-equipped safari, nicely stocked with bakshish, can almost invariably secure recruits, an outfit that even looks reduced is received very coldly by the native African, who is the primeval and ranking snob of the world. But it is when the wayfarers appear actually destitute that the absolute omissions from the native's make-up become evident. He has no conception of pity, mercy, gratitude, or generosity; these qualities simply do not exist in his shortened gamut of sensations. It is not an unusual thing for a sleeping child to have its face torn off by a hyena; the native will tell you how it happened—and always with a broad grin.

Knowing these things, Rordon did not look for presents from the insignificant head man of the Mwembe; he simply seized what eatables he needed and paid for them with a trinket, a button, an old knife, or a bit of worn cloth. In the same manner he disappropriated the newest and cleanest of the huts. This was a serious matter, for it encroached upon the laws of the land. Two wives may not live in the same habitation, else what would become of the revenue from the hut-tax?

Upon seeing the lowering looks of the village chief, Rordon called the faithful and resourceful Ibrahim into conference.

" Ibrahim," he said, " take this head man aside. Tell him I do not wish to raise a hut-palaver, but that I must have either the hut or a guide to Zomba and six carriers. Tell him I have much bakshish in Zomba, but that there is something much more important there, as far as you are concerned. Tell him that in Zomba a young wife awaits you whose skin is like the ebony stick, whose teeth are like cowry-shells for whiteness, and whose lips are red like the blood of a freshly killed young kid. Tell him that I have a gun which I would not exchange for twenty women, but in order that your eyes, being weary with the long safari, may drink their thirst away with looking at your young wife, you will steal the gun and leave it with him in exchange for the guide and the six *shensi.* I have spoken."

" *N'Dio,*" said Ibrahim, and withdrew on his mission.

The matter was thus arranged at the cost of the least valuable of the expedition's shotguns. For each of the six carriers a shell was demanded, and for two additional shells sufficient supplies for five days—all that could be conveniently carried—were purchased. Thus provisioned, the weary cortège once more took up the march.

On the second night out, in spite of the watch-fires, a lion leaped into the camp and out, taking with him one of the new porters. Rordon was dragged out of his sleep by the excited Swahilis, but so quietly did he take the catastrophe that neither Harlow nor the girls awoke. In the morning he said nothing of what had happened, leaving them to suppose that the missing porter had decamped.

They had traveled only forty miles in two days when the guide and two of the five remaining carriers deserted.

The discovery delayed the next morning's start; the blow seemed to have stunned Rordon. He sat under a tree, elbows on knees, chin in cupped hands, staring up the meandering valley of the Lujenda. He was measuring the strength left in him. Traveling alone, night and day, how long would it take him to feel his way along that valley to Lake Shirwa? He did not know; he dared not try, for should he pull through and get back with help, to find Harlow and the two girls destroyed by their inexperience in the face of very actual dangers, he would go mad with remorse.

Miss Hume came to sit beside him.

" Flange," she said, " you're worried, and I know why. If you were alone you would be laughing."

Rordon glanced at her, smiling through the trouble in his eyes. He said nothing.

" Cut it," continued Miss Hume. " Help us build a permanent camp here, trust us to do all the things we've seen you do so often, and then go. You know it's the sensible thing, don't you?"

Rordon looked at her wonderingly and absently. He was contrasting her words, her appearance, her judgment, and her actions with those that could have been expected of the Miss Helen Pelter Hume of the Aspic roof—a person who had inspired him with fear from the moment of her casual decision, casually expressed, to come to Africa. His instinctive fright on that occasion had not been justified along the lines of its inception, but it had been supplanted and surpassed by a fear of a totally different nature. He was afraid now, not to have Miss Hume with him, but to leave her.

" Don't you?" she repeated.

" Don't I what?" asked Rordon.

" Know it's the sensible thing to do."

" Yes, it is," he admitted without enthusiasm. " But I can't do it."

" Why not?"

" Because I can't."

" Have you turned woman, to give me an answer like that?" demanded Miss Hume.

" No," said Rordon, " but I might as well. The truth is, Nell, I have a rotten funny feeling. I'm in love."

Nothing could have surpassed the despondency of that cry, which so surprised Miss Hume that her adorable jaw hung open for at least six ticks of Mary's clock before it slowly closed and transformed her face into the old-time and almost forgotten natural habitat of mischief which it had once been continually. She smiled, her eyelids fluttered, the eyes behind them grew wide and translucent with the light of a brilliant sun shining through glossy brown tobacco-leaves.

" With me?" she breathed.

" I wasn't dreaming!" Harlow suddenly yelled. " Oh, swordfish! I wasn't dreaming! Molly! Nell! Flange! God help me, didn't you *hear* it? *Am* I dreaming? Look and tell me—have I gone mad?"

" Yes, you have, Charlie," said Rordon, startled for once.

He leaped to his feet, picked up a club of fire-wood, and advanced cautiously on

Harlow, who was gyrating in a most peculiar manner, first on one foot, then on the other, and pointing in a certain direction between whirls.

"Look before you hit me!" he cried to Rordon, without ceasing his evolutions. "Look before you hit me. Look before—"

Rordon did; the club dropped to the ground, and his jaw almost as far. He rubbed his eyes, coughed, pinched himself, and finally murmured weakly:

"Charlie, please say gra— Please say something!"

By this time each of the girls had gasped "Oh! Oh!" but even in that crucial moment they hushed their cries to hear Mr. Harlow speak. He folded his arms, and with eyes fixed on an approaching object, delivered himself of the following:

"Imperial mackerel, wandering o'er the land,
Thrice welcome, stanch auxiliary fish!
I slept but now; a jinnee took my hand
And bade me haste to make a single wish.
'Transform yon piscatory bum, O Lord!'
I begged. 'Twas done; the fish became a Ford!

"Yeh! Whoopee! Hi, there!"

The jitney bumped along over the veld and came to a stop at about fifty yards' distance. Rordon perceived that it was packed with six khaki-clad soldiers besides the driver, and that six rifles were pointed at his very happy heart.

"Stand and give the countersign!" a voice called out.

"Countersign be damned!" shouted Rordon cheerfully.

"Approach, friend," replied the voice, "and tell us where the deuce you came from!"

Rordon walked grinning up to the jitney, from which the occupants were rapidly disembarking with all their eyes fixed over his shoulders at a point where he surmised were still standing Miss Hume and Miss Brunt.

"Who are you chaps?" he asked.

"Parker's column," replied a young officer. "And you?"

"Rordon."

The young officer turned and quietly collected three half-sovereigns and three verbal I. O. U.'s from his companions.

"I win a small bet," he murmured apologetically.

Presently two more of the one ubiquitous machine on earth arrived, heavily laden, and on that spot was held a mighty palaver. The officer in command decided that Rordon was of more immediate importance to colony headquarters than a prisoner of war, and assigned to him and his party the least repaired of the jitneys. So overwhelming had been the flood of questions interlarded with news poured into the thirsty ears of the safari survivors, that they ended up by grasping nothing. They parted from their friends in need, stunned but scarcely enlightened.

Over a trail which dodged along the open veld, struck straight through freshly cut bush, and bumped over corduroy causeways in swamps and over brush layers where the sand was deep, stopped again and again by curious officers and stared at by all others, the jitney finally reached Zomba, which, while it is not the center of civilization, generally contains at least one baronet, his lady, and several paunchy individuals who walk around under pith helmets and green-lined umbrellas.

One of these latter attracted the attention of both Rordon and his party, but for different reasons. The girls and Harlow saw only something as disreputably clothed as themselves, while Rordon recognized a friend. The person of this individual was stout to the verge of obesity; he carried an umbrella with three stays broken, and wore a pulpy old helmet, a ragged coat, and a moth-eaten cravat. He had a drooping mustache, a pendulous lower lip, and bulging eyes, and was talking to himself when Rordon hailed him.

"Hey! Alfred! What's the good news, old man?"

The individual stopped, stared belligerently, then inquiringly; finally his face broke into an astoundingly winning smile.

"Hello, Rordon, old chap! How are you?"

He nodded and started on his way again.

"Cut out the pose stuff, Alfred," ordered Rordon, "and come here. I want you to meet my friends. Folks, this is the Hon. Alfred Butte, the resident magistrate."

"Isn't he a dear?" murmured Miss Hume quite audibly.

Mr. Butte blinked three times.

"Charmed, I'm sure."

His eyes crinkled up in the wonderfully kindly smile. He became their obliging host, had them in for tiffin, did not even offer them a wash, but let them ask for it, supplied Rordon with a file of the Buluwayo *Planet*, two months old, but still containing a first instalment on arrears of news,

and finally had his head boy secure reservations on the next train out over the Shire Railway via Blantyre to Chindio on the Zambezi.

Before these events were consummated, however, Rordon and Harlow were summoned to military headquarters. There the former found an old acquaintance in the commanding officer, who promptly subjected him to a close examination on what he knew and had seen of enemy territory and activity.

"What's the use?" said Rordon finally. "Here's one of Merton's note-books on 'Military Forces and Their Disposition,' that will tell you more in half an hour than I could in a year—the very sort of stuff that they killed him trying to get."

The colonel's face hardened.

"What about you, Rordon?" he asked. "And you, too, Mr. Harlow? Commissions are coming fast and plenty just now; it will be difficult later on."

Rordon smiled and shook his head.

"Colonel, you've got a job here—a long, slow, and ticklish one, but it's small, and you know it. I'm going where you would like to go, and I imagine Harlow will trail along, if it's only to persuade himself that war has been declared."

The next morning early, Mr. Butte grunted good-by to the party from his bed, and they hastened to the train. As they passed several rather smart bungalows, Miss Hume expressed thanksgiving.

"Oh, wasn't it lovely to find somebody as ragged and dirty as ourselves to stay with?"

"Yes," said tender-hearted Mary; "but did you ever see just such a smile?"

With much chatter they whiled away the hours to Chindio, and from there the two days to Chinde, where they were lucky in catching a small coaster bound for Beira, only eight hours away.

At the first mention of that port, Miss Hume got the idea that it was still as distant as her very vivid memory of it, but when Rordon suddenly announced that he could make out the lighthouse which marked the end of the beach where he had found her crying, she was swept from her poise and mental balance.

She left her seat to go to the rail and stare. In two hours, in less, she was to reach back six months in her life. Six months! She relived them now swiftly, their thrills, pleasures, and hardships, and strove vainly to see herself in that looking-glass.

Who was she? A brown-eyed, brown-haired, brown-skinned ragamuffin in khaki, a hoyden, a murderer of eland bulls, a man's woman in a man's world—or was she Miss Helen Pelter Hume, shortly to repossess and be repossessed by six generous trunks of finery? She wondered.

XIX

"By Jove!" yelled Harlow, leaping from his seat and a long silence beside Mary.

He walked up and down the diminutive quarter-deck with wild strides, and pounded his head with his fists.

"Charlie!" cried the girl, springing up and running to him. "Why, what's the matter?"

"Zomba!" groaned Harlow. "Zomba!"

"Well, what about it?" demanded Mary, seizing him by the arm.

"We forgot to get married!"

"So we did! Oh, so we did!" cried Mary.

Her blue eyes filled with tears. Harlow seized both her hands, and they stood staring at each other, their lips trembling with emotion.

"Oh, Molly," begged Harlow, "can you ever, ever forgive me?"

"Forgive you, darling?" said Molly. "Why, it's just as much my fault as yours. I ought to have reminded you."

They gazed and gazed; finally, very slowly, believing the whole world to be contained only in each other's eyes, they kissed.

"Disgusting," growled Rordon. "Absolutely revolting!"

"It is *not!*" snapped Helen, turning on him with a flash of her eyes, and immediately thereafter disappearing into the stuffy cabin, from which she did not emerge until the craft was at anchor.

At Beira several things happened. Helen dug out her six large trunks of frou-frous, and went into a sartorial trance. Mary looked on, and caught the disease through being presented with an entire trousseau. Rordon traded an elephant-gun worth two hundred dollars for a complete file of the London *Times* from the beginning of the war to the latest date available. Harlow and Mary Brunt were married.

Four days were consumed by these various interests, during which Miss Hume and Rordon were preoccupied by their own thoughts, Mary and Charlie by each other.

On the fifth day the Llansteffan Castle steamed in, dwarfing the port and everything in it. They went on board at once, and since they were now faultlessly clothed —the men in natty, starchy " whites," the girls in filmy organdy, or whatever it is that has dots or sprigs of flowers all over it, with thin lavender and mauve piping at the edges, and that swirls about the figure on the slightest provocation of a breeze—they wondered why people stared.

The passengers ogled thus rudely, because never before in the experience of any of them had four such human beings appeared at one and the same time. Brilliant-eyed, smooth-skinned, incredibly supple of limb, the two men slim-hipped, the two girls deep-bosomed, all of them fresh as new pins and smelling of soap—could any be blamed who looked, caught breath, and wondered at the eternal alchemy of health and youth, king and queen of omnipotent cosmetics? No; they couldn't.

The party disappeared promptly into its three staterooms; Rordon driving before him a " boy " laden with his precious and enormous bundle of news. He tipped the porter, threw him out, closed and locked the door of his cabin, took off his dolman and his shirt, chucked a couple of pillows into the end of the couch, propped himself up against them, and began to read.

The newspapers were arranged in chronological order in a pile on the floor; a camp-stool held an open box of a hundred cigarettes and a ship's water-tumbler for an ash-tray. Rordon read and read—he read as he had traveled on the way to Merton's rescue, without stopping to eat or sleep.

At nine o'clock of the next morning Harlow hammered on the door and asked what was the matter. Rordon arose to let him in. There were deep shadows under his unusually brilliant eyes, and he needed a shave badly; otherwise he seemed quite fit.

" Charlie," he said, " you want to know what is the matter? Well, take these newspapers and read them."

He pressed on him more than half of his entire stock of papers—the half he had finished with—and gently pushed him out. Then he closed and locked the door and went back to his reading.

It should be remembered that at Zomba, on the Zambezi, and even at Beira, Rordon and his party had had no opportunity to gather more than a dazed conception of what had been happening to the world during the first four months of war. The people they met were invariably blinded to all preceding chapters in detail by the last crashing event. They were incoherent where they were not entirely speechless before what appeared to them an incredible ignorance.

" What? Haven't heard about Belgium? Well—oh, hell! Come and have a drink."

As a result Rordon received in thirty-six overcrowded hours the full shock of a sequence of stupendous happenings which assailed and overthrew all his mental conceptions like a battering-ram. He had left Europe and civilization at large at a vicious and stagnant level of peace, apparently manacled to commercialized ambitions, financial hegemony, and neurotic ideals—a peace which was sordid, which debased men to the level of ambulating appetites, but which for its self-protection seemed destined to perpetuate those high desires of the human heart which had temporarily severed man from barbarism.

In thirty-six hours he had been called upon to digest the outrage of Belgium, the blatant repudiation of national treaty honor, the subjection of white women once more as the prize of vilest booty, the substitution of hate for chivalry toward a valiant foe, and, to add to those crushing revivals, the mutilation of little children, death from the air and from under the sea to non-combatants, the doctrine of frightfulness, and the employment of poisonous gases! The cumulative effect of these world-shaking events on a man who was genuinely a seeker of the high and clean can scarcely be conceived by those who read of them day by day.

With his heart full to bursting, Rordon turned instinctively toward a comprehending sympathy. He felt a sudden impulse to seek out Helen — the Helen who had stood by him on the banks of the Rovuma in a poignant evening of strain and worry, and who had said nothing but had been much—the Helen whom he knew not by flippant word of mouth, but by those rare contacts of the silent soul which strike unforgotten sparks in the long darkness of human intercourse. Slipping on his tunic and buttoning it up, to hide the lack of a shirt, he went on deck.

The sight that met him made him raise his hand and pass it across his eyes. He suffered the blow of a recurring unpleasant

impression caused by a repeated distressing situation.

Miss Hume, dressed in the filmiest of white frocks, was seated in a *chaise longue*, one dangling hand playing languidly with the straw in a long, cool drink. At each side of her, and at her feet, sat and stood men like bees around a honey-pot. She raised her brook-brown eyes slowly to meet Rordon's hurt and accusing gaze. For a second he fought manfully against the impersonal barrier he found in those eyes. Just as he thought the full force of his will must win her back to sincerity, she spoke.

"I'm sure there's a barber on board, Flange."

He turned, fled to his cabin, and sat down for a bad quarter of an hour with his hands on his knees, his eyes staring dumbly into space. Then, with a shrug and a slow smile, he arose and went about the business of shaving, bathing, and otherwise making himself as clean and attractive as God meant him to be.

In the mean time Harlow had been infected with the virus of the news; for a time it threatened to bring a cloud to the first week of his honeymoon. He was saved by Mary's taking up a paper and beginning to read. From that moment their mounting righteous anger kept step and welded them closer and closer together.

On the other hand, from the time of coming suddenly upon Miss Hume, revamped to her former butterfly proportions and propensities, Rordon had had no traffic with her. He carefully avoided an appearance of having severed friendly relations, but he restricted all his remarks to impersonal and casual subjects, never approached her while she was alone, and promptly had business elsewhere if he saw her headed his way.

At first Miss Hume took his neglect philosophically, but there were one or two occasions when her soft finger-tips felt a distinct itching, as if sheathed claws were on their way out from long hiding. Once it was because Rordon stood by the rail for a solid hour of moonlight talking to a fluffy-haired, brainless, addle-pated image of a Dutch doll. Again it was when a near-by lady remarked him passing, and said:

"There goes a man. He steps over the female brains lying around this boat without raising his feet."

Once or twice Miss Hume tried to make friends again with her eyes, but Rordon's knew better than to meet the enemy. He realized at last that one can't fall into deep pools of opalescent light, any more than of water, and drown, if one but takes to the desert and stays there. What made his position almost impregnable was the fact that his seething mind was actually not thinking of Miss Hume. He wasn't worrying—at least, not about her; and, alas for her peace, she knew it.

Gradually she dissuaded her various swains from blocking what cool air there was with hot. She developed a caustic wit, which not only cut but left a wound, and thus succeeded eventually in clearing away the masculine rubbish around her. Then she waited, sullen and solitary, in her chair for three mortal days. Mary came to her, Harlow stopped, but neither for long.

"Poor Nell, she is feeling depressed," Mary said.

"I barely gather your meaning," replied Harlow. "To me it appears that she is holding séance with the queen bee of grouches."

Rordon clung to the varying atmosphere of whichever happened to be the other side of the boat.

He had worked himself into a high state of excitement with his planning for the immediate future, and, like all persons carried on a high wave of enthusiasm, he was really lonely for companionship, but was not capable of defining his malady. It kept him awake at night and drove him to pacing the decks until a steward came up to inform him politely:

"The captain's compliments, sir, but the passengers below are complaining."

Thus driven, he sought the forward steel deck over the forecastle, where it was to be hoped that the sailors, wearied by toil, would not wake to curse his light, quick tread. It was a glorious, starry night, still without a moon. The ship behind him was in absolute darkness, but from her prows tumbled, in the shape of an arrow-head, great solid blotches of phosphorus. He stood by the capstan for a moment and watched the balls of drenched fire rolling away just under the transparent level of the coaming wash. Never, in all his wanderings, had he seen the like of phosphorus for quantity, fantastic grouping, and startling effect.

The beauty of the sight absorbed him so that when he became aware of a faint sobbing near by, his first thought was that it

was a waste of time for any one to be crying when one might be using one's eyes to far better purpose in looking on the blazing sea. He turned to make an observation to that effect, and saw standing by the rail, with arms and head fallen upon it, a pitiful little figure dressed in so ragged a khaki shirt, so tattered a short khaki skirt, and so scarred a pair of brown walking-boots, that surely only once before in his life had he seen their equal and counterpart.

Sudden, hot blood surged into his temples as if it was trying to beat its way out.

"Nell!" he whispered. "Nell!"

She did not move. He went to her side and laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Nell, old girl," he begged, "tell me. What is it? What's the matter?"

Her sobs only deepened. They came in tumbling, gurgling, choking lumps out of her throat. They shook her whole body, convulsed her back and her shoulders, and transformed her into a pathetic, heartrending, small, but terribly compact bundle of utter wo.

"Oh!" she gasped in the high, strange voice of weeping childhood. "I'm s-so miserable. So miserable. O-oh!"

Rordon picked her up bodily in his arms and swung around, to meet the curious face of the sailor on lookout duty.

"Get out of here for a quid's worth, will you?" he demanded sharply.

"Governor," said the sailor over his shoulder as he withdrew, "for a quid I'll promise not to look, hear, ner think for an hour."

Rordon sat down on the deck with his back against the capstan, and arranged the burden in his arms so that its head and tumbled hair rested comfortably on his shoulder. Nell was still crying, but the sounds of her weeping had undergone a subtle change. If Harlow had been there, he would have said that she was over her carbureter trouble and had her motor idling nicely; but Harlow was not there, nor were his flippant thoughts.

Rordon sat and stared at himself and at his life. He discovered in both a great emptiness—an emptiness into which the girl in his arms was rushing like a flood released, sweeping before it all his pet shibboleths, his measured and ticketed fears, his philosophies of individualism and integral freedom. And he did not care. He did not care for the flood, or for its trail of wreckage. Only one thing mattered—that he should hold forever this throbbing body, so small within his arms, so immeasurable in its range of emotions, in its lovable contradictions, in its power to surrender or withhold.

"Nell," he said, "don't cry, darling. Please don't cry!"

In a moment the sobs diminished, and presently ceased, save for an occasional gasping whimper.

"Your handkerchief, please," she asked.

He drew it out and started to dry her eyes, but she preferred to do the dabbing herself. When she had finished, she drew one last quivering, catching breath and said:

"I'll get up now, please."

She did, and had taken two steps toward the companionway when Rordon came to his senses. He sprang up and barred her road.

"Nell," he said, "don't go. You see, I—I love you."

"You what?" she asked, and then bowed her head, as if to listen the more intently.

"I love you," repeated Rordon.

"Oh, do you?" said Miss Hume. "Well, if you're going to insist on talking about it, I advise you to take a few lessons from Charlie."

"Take lessons from Charlie?" repeated Rordon, in a voice that was like the soft tread of a tiger.

"Yes," said Miss Hume, just a little bit frightened. "Did you think—did you—"

She stopped, her wide eyes fascinated by the twitching of his eyebrows.

Rordon took one step forward, and with a movement that was like the crack of a whip for swiftness, flung one hand around her and pinioned both her arms. The other hand flew at her throat and carried her head back to his shoulder.

"Charlie!" he growled. "I'll show you what Charlie can't teach me!"

Then he kissed her. He kissed her hair, her eyes, her cheeks and neck, and finally fell upon her mouth as if there he would live and die with all his veins pulsing and pounding out freedom's glad funeral-march. He hurt her arms, he crushed her body and robbed it of breath. She felt as if his unconscious strength might kill her.

"Oh, Flange!" she gasped. "Please, Flange. *Please!*"

"Please what?" asked Rordon roughly, clutching her shoulders as if to shake her.

"P-p-please do it again!"

THE END

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Father Was Right

A COMEDY OF COMMERCE

By Henry Payson Dowst

Illustrated by Stockton Mulford

THE big building of the Bosworth Press vibrated to the thundering symphony of its great machines. Day after day, year in and year out, these hungry mills devoured their enormous meed of paper — paper of all sorts, from the cheapest "news" to the fine vellums of Japan; and day by day, year in and year out, they spewed forth that same paper, printed in many tongues, cut, collated, and bound, to carry man's thought to man on a myriad of subjects.

Did the student of science wish to enrich his fellows with his conclusions touching the nebular hypothesis—at his own expense —let him go to Bosworth. And did he of a lesser science yearn to benefit humanity through the agency of pill, powder, or panacea, Bosworth would print for him brochures by the million, informing the aching multitudes that Papp's Painless Potion could be found at all drug-stores.

"We print everything," was Bosworth's slogan, a concept amply justified in practise.

Claiming a business kinship with the cheerful Philadelphia statesman-philosopher of colonial days, Hiram Bosworth had worked his toilsome way up the steeps of success from the humble office of an uncle in a remote New Hampshire town, who published a now long-forgotten weekly, probably called the *Bugle* or the *Guardian* or the *Palladium*. Here Hiram learned to stick the sticky types, make up the meager forms, and imprint therefrom, by means of a one-boy-power press, the scant edition of the gossipy sheet.

But no country village could long check the ambitions of such as Hiram Bosworth. He migrated, and as he went he wrought. So, at the end of a quarter-century, he became the master of a great business, a veritable institution, geared to vast requirements of product and speed. Where other

HARD-WORKING, HARD-THINKING, HARD-DRIVING, HE HAD PLOWED HIS WAY TO THE FOOT OF—

printers turned out thousands of impressions, Bosworth piled upon the quaking floors of his huge plant printed sheets running into the millions.

He made money.

"Cheap jobs for cheap Johns," was Bosworth's motto. His standards were the highest, his prices equally so. The paper, the ink, the presswork of a Bosworth booklet were the best. His types were the newest, the most attractive. A Bosworth page was a thing of beauty, an artistic concept, alluring the eye by the harmony of its proportions, lending to plausibility the support of fine balance and, when appropriate, the most charming of decorations.

In the Bosworth plant every function of the graphic art was performed in the service of Bosworth's customers. A score of artists wrought their dreams in line, wash, and color. On one floor the fiery acids and sharp tools of the engraver transferred these dreams upon metal plates, that the printing-presses might multiply their delights for the admiring eye of the public.

Paper in great cases and rolls awaited, in the Bosworth storehouse, the call of the cylinder. Snowy sheets of clay-finished "coated" paper, satin-textured; rainbow-hued stacks of cover stock; ponderous gray rolls of the humble news; toll of the pulp-forests or of Ireland's flax; coarse-fibered, thick-bulking textures of esparto-grass; sallow parchments of the Orient—all

—THE RAINBOW TO FIND THERE BUT A DUBIOUS REWARD—AN ATTACK OF NERVOUS PROSTRATION

these and many others crowded the plethoric stock-rooms.

Ben Franklin himself, inventor and seer, would have marveled at the vast, myriad-fingered presses, driven by the lightning of his own discovery, snatching the long, supple sheets from the rolls and by a kind of shrieking magic grinding them into a flooding torrent of completed books, printed, folded, trimmed, wire-stitched, ready for the reader's eye, moist and fragrant as new-baked loaves.

"This, Mr. Franklin," you could imagine Bosworth saying, as he guided his distinguished visitor from one department to another, "is our proving-room. Those hand-presses look familiar to you, I guess. I suppose you could manage one of them pretty well; but you'd find you got a bit more pressure than the old squeezers used to give you, eh?"

And afterward Bosworth would have taken Poor Richard back to his private office, handed him a cigar, and persuaded his guest to let him figure on the next job of almanacs.

"A man with your interests can't afford to be bothered with all these details, Mr. Franklin. Of course, we charge a good price, but it's economy in the long run to have our grade of work, especially with an intelligent class of readers like yours. Some of our bright young men in the copy department would be glad to take the writing

and editing off your hands, too; in fact, I should say when they once got the hang of it all you'd need to write would be a few wheezes for fillers. Of course you'd want the job to retain your personality as much as possible; but we'd manage that. I have one chap who's a wizard at imitating O. Henry, Kipling, and Bret Harte; and another did some John Milton verses for Summerby's Seed Catalogue that were wonderful. That was a four-color job, half a million copies. Let me show you a sample."

Thus is epitomized the career and success of Hiram Bosworth, printer, up to a day five years preceding the real beginning of this story. On that day the man of big achievements collapsed in his office. Hard-working, hard-thinking, hard-driving, he had plowed his way to the foot of the rainbow to find there but a dubious reward —an attack of nervous prostration.

Philip, his son, trained under his father's eye, bundled his ailing parent aboard a steamer bound for the soft airs and shimmering waters of the tropics. Afterward, Hiram tried golf, which he found moderately soothing. He went to sanatoriums and hotels and baths. He rode horses, drove an automobile, sought the advice of the Mikes and Pats who own health-farms in Long Island and Westchester, breathed the dry airs of Colorado and Arizona, inhaled the chill vapors of Newfoundland. Gradually he won back to health, and as gradually, but even more surely, acquired a distaste for the grind of running a print-shop. He learned to play, seriously, sometimes irritably; he unlearned the tedious routine of toil.

"I guess," said Gene Stokes, factory superintendent, "the old man's quit us for keeps."

"We'll worry along," replied Leach Curdy, general manager. "He can't kick, so long as the dividend-checks keep coming."

The Bosworth Press was kept going with all the appearance of continued prosperity. There was a board of directors, which included Philip, the old man's son, who bore the entitlement of "production manager." Philip's job was to oversee what was known as creative work. He bossed the art department and the copy department, was responsible for plans and layouts, and exercised general supervision over the engraving department as well as a critical function looking to the ultimate quality of the work turned out by the house.

Also on the board were Leach Curdy, general manager; Peter Nagel, head of the sales department; Abner Dickerman, the company's attorney; Chester, of the Fourteenth Avenue Trust Company, where Bosworth had banked for a decade; and two smutty-fingered representatives of the operatives, Jerry Quinn and Ben Moore. Hiram Bosworth had always inclined to exemplify something of the cooperative idea in conducting his affairs. That was why the toilers and sweaters in the big plant were represented on the board. The "help" were permitted in a limited way to buy stock in Bosworth Press, paying for it piecemeal from their savings or their accretion of dividends.

Hiram used to say:

"By gorry, I've got a loyal bunch around me! I work 'em like the devil, pay 'em well, and treat 'em fair."

Hiram was a tyrant, benevolently despotic, irascible, gruff, soft-hearted, shrewd, far-seeing, exacting, and charitable at once; a man of honor and ideals touching the integrity that had cost him his health at the comparatively young age of fifty-five or so, a man who looked his years because of his white hair and tired eyes. Up to the day of his sudden collapse, he never failed to beat the eight-o'clock bell that signaled the beginning of business; never failed to lag behind the five-thirty stroke that rang its close.

"What I ask them to do, I'm not afraid to do myself," he said.

II

Desire Brown had never seen Hiram Bosworth. She went to work for Bosworth Press about too years after the head of the house had his famous sinking-spell and departed in search of his lost health.

Desire was Leach Curdy's steno—that is to say, his secretary. She had now been employed at Bosworth's for three years, and if any one knew more about the general run and requirements of the great business than Desire, it must have been Curdy himself. Curdy was an adjunct of Bosworth Press dating back a decade or more, a man of thirty-five or thereabouts, who had grown with the business and was believed by the old man to be a square peg fitting accurately into a square hole.

The girl was twenty-four years old, as pretty as — well, Desire Brown would qualify instantly for a magazine cover, or

one of those less-obtrusive pages where the cold-cream sisterhood spreads its snares. She had hair of a warm brown with glints of gold in it, and brown eyes as well, which sometimes, especially when she laughed, seemed to have caught something of the same sunshiny light. She was rather slender, but her shirt-waist fitted without coaxing.

She always had a trim and tidy look, which was partly owing to the fact that she liked nice-looking shoes and silk stockings; and, going to the other extreme for a final characterizing touch, the only thing about her which at all suggested disorder was an aggregation of shimmery little curls about her face and ears and neck which she vainly tried to subdue by means of a couple of pencils thrust into places where they were intended to serve the double purpose of restraint and convenience.

She was businesslike, interested in her work, sensible, good-humored, a steel trap for brains, efficient, brisk, but withal serene and unworried—just exactly the kind of girl you have been looking for to fill a place in your own office, if you have one.

Desire lived with her mother and two sisters somewhere north of One Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Street, and adored Douglas Fairbanks. Every Friday afternoon she drew twenty-one dollars from the cashier. The only other item of interest about Desire Brown at this stage of the story is the fact that Philip Bosworth, production manager and son of the old man, was wild about her. To say that Desire was unappreciative of the admiration thus bestowed upon her by the good-looking young printer would imply that she lacked a sense of romance, and there is no such intent. But Desire was very sensible. She was given to reflection, and a kind of prudent logic told her that something beyond mere devotion was necessary in qualifying a suitor; and Philip Bosworth was young.

True, he was very engaging. He had nice, courteous ways, and a wholesome democracy of bearing that pleased her. She felt that he was honorable, clean, earnest, and capable. She wondered if he were as shrewd as his father. She wondered if he were inclined to be easy-going, too readily swayed by the opinions or arguments of others. She believed and hoped that as he developed into a business man and executive he would learn to make quick decisions that were as correct as they were prompt. She watched to see how he judged men and associates, to see who influenced him, what kind of arguments suited his standards—what, in fact, his standards were.

Desire saw in Philip Bosworth a youth with immense possibilities for success, by reason of the fact that he was the old man's son. She knew the business was an exacting one, highly technical, hedged about with pitfalls, made up of a multitude of factors that demanded accurate and sound judgments. A single detail could rob a job of its profit, or cause a considerable loss. So far, Philip seemed to be making good.

But Desire thought the young man deferred too much to the opinions of Leach Curdy, the general manager. Frankly, and although she had been Curdy's secretary for three years, Desire did not, could not like him. She was loyal and faithful; and Curdy always treated her with consideration—or as much consideration as he accorded any one. Curdy was cold, icy-cold. He was a merciless driver, borrowing the old man's tyranny without the old man's fairness. Desire, who did not know Bosworth, was inclined to judge the founder of the business by what she deemed he had imparted to Curdy of irritability, selfishness, and domineering importance.

Yet all these traits she would have forgiven if she had fully trusted the man. She didn't know why she had not the fullest confidence in his integrity; but something told her that Curdy had in his make-up a streak of yellow. She tried, loyally, to overcome this feeling and take him at his face value. But in three years of daily association with him she failed in this.

So, when she saw Philip Bosworth seemingly too inclined to yield to all Curdy's judgments, or even whims, she wished the younger man might show a little more backbone.

When, after she had served Bosworth's three years, the old man suddenly popped up, she soon had opportunity to learn how far her intuitions regarding Philip and the general manager had led her aright.

III

Hiram Bosworth stepped out of his big, closed car and stood on the sidewalk a moment, gazing aloft at the Bosworth Building with an appraising eye. One would have thought him, at first, a perfect stranger. But Hiram was simply looking to see if there had been any change in five years.

SHE NOW RECOGNIZED WHO AND WHAT HE WAS, AND SHE WAS PROPERLY RESPECTFUL

Apparently satisfied that the bricks and windows and cornices were about as he had left them, he moved briskly across the walk and entered the building.

Hiram was tall, bony, rather bulky. Slightly stooping, his broad shoulders expressed power. So did the large, well-shaped head. His hair was almost snow-white; but his cheeks were ruddy with health. Little wrinkles around his eyes told a story of years spent in concentrated effort, and gave his eyes a somewhat tired look; and if your judgment were a hasty one, you would have fixed his age at seventy. In reality he was ten years younger; and by reason of his five years of rest, he was possessed of the full vigor of health and the one-hundred-per-cent alertness of any business man at his best.

That was why he had come back to the Bosworth Press. He was tired of the endless search for something to entertain

him. He ate like a horse, slept well at night, and thought as clearly as ever. He felt in himself twenty years of hard, productive work. He owned a great business; why let others run away with it? After all, he knew he had never in all his life got half the fun out of anything that he got out of the commercial game. He had played it with a master-hand. In five years there might have been a few new tricks invented; if so, he wanted to know them and devise some improvements.

Hiram walked from the elevator on the top floor, which was the sixth, straight to the wicket marked "Information." A young lady looked up and inquired sweetly whom he wished to see.

After all, she couldn't know, he thought. She was a newcomer, of course. She couldn't remember him; at about the time he had left, this girl had been playing with doll-babies, or going to school in knee-length petticoats. Still, in his own factory, to be held up—

"Open the door, if you don't mind," he said. "I'm Mr. Bosworth. I guess you don't remember me."

The young lady stretched forth a hand and pressed some hidden spring, whereupon the latch of the door beside her little window clicked, permitting Hiram Bosworth to pass through. But the girl had a hesitant look, as if she were in doubt of the propriety of letting in a perfect stranger without the usual formalities.

"If you want to see Mr. Philip Bosworth," she said, "his office is the third door on the right."

"Thanks," said Hiram.

He moved off amid a multitude of desks, at each of which sat a worker. These were the clerks—accountants, billers, cost-keepers, and typists. There was a small army of them, all busy, all at this instant taking a sly peep at the bulky, loose-clothed form of Hiram Bosworth. Surprising, he thought, how few familiar faces there were in the room.

At one desk he passed, however, sat a veteran—Homer Bangs. Bangs was chief of the estimate department.

"Hello, Homer!" said Hiram. "How's the boy?"

Bangs, who was slightly rheumatic, got hastily to his feet and seized the hand of his returned employer.

"Well, well, Mr. Bosworth, I'm glad to see you! Quite a stranger, ain't you? How long has it been—five years? Don't think we've changed much, have we? Oh, a few new faces, that's all."

Hiram passed on toward the third door at the right. Homer Bangs was all of sixty. It stung Bosworth to realize that only "the oldest inhabitant" seemed to remember him. Of course, in the fifty or more people in the room, there were others, but they were too far away to greet him. Hiram knew it would require only about a minute for every soul there to learn that the old man was back—but how many would there be asking:

"Well, who the devil is the old man, anyhow?"

Bosworth reached the third door at the right. The door was a little ajar, and he could see inside his son Philip talking with two visitors. Philip did not see him, and the old man passed on. Farther along, in the corner, was the door of the office that had been his.

Just outside this door was placed a desk, at which sat a young woman with brown hair delicately shot with streaks of gold. She was operating a typewriter, her white fingers flying among the keys with almost unbelievable speed, while the machine gave forth a *rat-tat-tat* like the roll of a woodpecker's beak against a hollow tree. This young lady looked up inquiringly, just as Hiram extended his hand toward the knob of the door.

"Did you wish to see Mr. Curdy?" she asked with cool courtesy. "Who shall I say wants to see him?"

Desire arose and advanced to the door. There was something protective in her attitude, something official. She possessed authority. Hiram's hand dropped at his side, guiltily.

"Tell him the old man's back!" he snapped.

Good Lord! A plumb stranger in his own house! Held up by every whippersnapper and made to give his pedigree! He stood aside and permitted Desire Brown to pass, noting that she was deliciously pretty.

"Got the office filled up with scatterbrains," he grumbled to himself. "She's a pert piece; acts like she was boss!"

Miss Brown returned, dimpled, and said he might go in. Her smile told Hiram that everything was all right. She now recognized who and what he was, and she was properly respectful.

"Better be," he grumbled inwardly.

Then, stepping through the door, he greeted Leach Curdy. The latter was already on his feet, advancing to meet him.

"As I live," he said. "Well, well! So you thought you'd drop in on us, eh? Phil know you're here? I guess he's got a couple of customers in with him. Sit down; have a cigar! How have things been with you? You're looking splendidly, Mr. Bosworth, splendidly!"

Now what was it in this cordiality that made Hiram Bosworth wince? He didn't so much blame Curdy for having usurped his room and his desk. Of course, the general manager would move back into other quarters now; but this genial how-do-you-doness had the wrong ring. Curdy was treating him like a visitor.

"I got restless," said Hiram, sitting down and lighting Curdy's cigar. "A man can't go on doing nothing forever; not when he hasn't a good excuse."

"I'm glad you're feeling so well," said Curdy. "Are you in the city for long?"

"Huh?"

"I say, are you staying in town for quite a while, or are you planning some new adventure?" Curdy raised his voice a trifle; the old man must have grown deaf in the last five years.

"Quite a while? Why, I'm back for good. Got enough of the butterfly life. After this, thirty-six holes of golf a week is my limit; just enough to keep me fit. I'll give you a couple of days to get things fixed up for me; I don't suppose it's fair not to give you more time, but I'm sort of impatient to get busy. I never realized before how good printers' ink smelled."

Curdy listened to this brief announcement with amazement. He had thought the old man might come back some day—that is, for the first three or even four years he had thought so; but lately he had practically dismissed the possibility. How could Bosworth hope to pick up the threads of a big business after being completely out of touch with it for five years?

"Oh, I see," he said a trifle feebly. "That's good, Mr. Bosworth. I hadn't supposed—that is, I wasn't planning— Oh, we'll have things adjusted right off. You can move in any time. I guess you'll want your old office back, won't you?"

Good Lord! He *guessed!* He put it in the form of a question! Where the devil did he expect the owner of the business was going to stay? Down-stairs with the janitor? Hiram's irritability increased; and yet it wasn't the thing to let it show.

"Well," he said, "take your time, Leach, take your time. I'll be round in the morning, but you don't have to make yourself a lot of inconvenience. Suppose you and I share this room for a while? Then you won't have to break your neck getting out—"

"Oh, by no means," protested Curdy. "Couldn't think of it. You must have your old office, just as always."

There was a large magnanimity in his tone and manner, as if he were conferring a favor. Hiram arose.

"I'll drop in on Phil," he said. "Business pretty good, Leach?"

"M-m, yes, very good for this time of year."

Hiram pushed open Philip's office door and walked in without knocking. The two visitors had gone. Philip was poring over some layouts of a catalogue sent in to him from the estimate department for definite data, and did not at once look up. Hiram stood looking down at Phil's orderly desk; the neatly labeled pigeonholes, the fresh blue blotter, the ink-well and pens in regular array—all very businesslike and systematic. Philip was checking over some sheets and figuring type sizes on a bit of scratch-paper. He worked with an admirable precision, wasting no motions, setting down no superfluous marks. It was good to see him thus absorbed in his work, so that even the entrance of an intruder did not at once gain his attention.

Hiram sat down alongside his son's desk and said sharply:

"I'm in the market for a million eight-sheet posters in color. Mr. Curdy referred me to—"

"Father!" cried Philip. "Dad! Great Scott! What are you doing here? I thought you were in Banff!"

"Was, until last Friday. Got restless. Phil, I've changed my mind. I'm too young to retire; I'm going to get back on the treadmill."

"Good!" shouted his son. "Hooray! That's the way to talk! Can't tell how we've missed you! Always hoped you would get over that foolish idea of yours that you'd had enough. Let's get Curdy in and tell him."

"I've told him."

"Good! He's occupying your office; we'll have him out of there by noon.

Curdy's our g. m., you know. Board of directors thought he had the ability—"

"Curdy's smart. What are you doing?"

"Production manager—art and engraving, and quality of output, you know."

"Sounds all right. Guess I was always my own general manager and production manager, too. Well, high-sounding titles don't hurt anything—or help much, either. If you get the work done, that's all that's necessary. Say, who's the young lady sitting outside of Curdy's office? Kind of a reigning princess or something? She put on considerable airs."

"FATHER!" CRIED PHILIP. "GREAT SCOTT! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? I THOUGHT YOU WERE IN BANFF!"

"That's Miss Brown, Desire Brown. She's Curdy's secretary."

"Oh, so Curdy has a secretary, has he? Girl named Desire, eh? Well, I don't desire her around me any, thanks! She's too pert."

"Why, Dad Bosworth! That girl is positively the most efficient, capable, reliable, dependable —"

"Enough, enough!" cried Hiram. "What's the matter with you boys? Got to have a broiler to do your thinking for you? Kind of a brain in petticoats? Next thing you and Curdy'll have a couple of liveried butlers or something to fetch in customers' cards."

Now Hiram knew he was harsh and unreasonable in saying these things. He had come into his own office and had been treated like a stranger; and this Miss Brown had as much as called him down for daring to lay hands on the door-knob of a room that had been his *sanctum sanctorum* from the first day the Bosworth Press had moved into its new building. Mentally, old Hiram mimicked Desire's ladylike tones, imparting to them an offensive, mincing quality of his own:

"Do you wish to see Mr. Curdy? Who shall I say wants to see him?"

"Well, Phil," he said, puffing at his cigar, "I'll trot along. To-morrow morning I'll be on the job; and if Curdy can get fixed

up in some other place, I'll just sit right down at my own desk and see how long it takes me to get my brain speeded up to the old Bosworth gait. 'Twon't take long, I'll tell you. Couldn't have stayed away another day and kept out of a bughouse."

Hiram arose and edged toward the door.

"I don't suppose," he said frankly, "you boys will be overmuch tickled to have me back. Curdy didn't cheer very loud, that I could notice. I suppose you've got things geared differently from what they were in my day. I'm not narrow, though; I'm not blind to improvements. I'm not too old to learn, and if you young chaps can show me anything, I'm more than glad to listen. I don't want you to feel I'm coming back to upset you."

"Forget it, dad," said Phil. "It's just adding another brain and a good one—easily the best of the lot."

Hiram went away wondering if his son meant that. Of course he didn't. It was plain enough Phil was being polite. He, Hiram, was an old-timer, who had come back from the discard to interfere with progress. He was an intruder, an interloper.

Well, it was his business. These young upstarts were there by his sufferance. And that girl! Curdy could have her, but he'd better keep her out of Hiram Bosworth's way. Hiram didn't want any lady watchdog at his threshold—not much!

He got into his car and his chauffeur, by name James Gaffney, drove him up-town to a club distinguished for its ponderous respectability. Hiram's wife and daughter called Gaffney "James," but Hiram addressed him as "Jim," and gave him cigars. Mrs. Bosworth and Mary said this was the way to spoil a good servant.

Hiram chuckled after a while, thinking of the consternation on Curdy's face on learning that the old man was coming back to take charge of things. Philip had behaved better; he, at least, had had grace enough to conceal his chagrin.

"I'll show 'em," grumbled Hiram. "I'll show 'em!"

IV

"I TELL you it's all wrong; I won't stand for it!" roared Hiram Bosworth, one afternoon something like a week following his abrupt appearance at the office. "You boys don't use sound judgment. How the devil do you figure you're making money on such a contract?"

Hiram and his son Philip and Leach Curdy were seated in the old man's office, with Peter Nagel, head salesman, going over some orders Nagel had just brought up for acceptance. One called for a very large delivery of catalogues for a giant mercantile concern in the Middle West.

"Well," said Leach, "you've got to admit a job like this means plenty of work for all our help for some weeks, and no idle presses; so we can afford to take it at less than our standard profit—"

"No you can't!" howled Hiram. "I say you can't. What do you think we established a standard profit for? This business is run to make money. We don't want jobs we lose on. Cheap jobs for the cheap Johns, I say."

"But Mr. Bosworth, this job is profitable—a low percentage on a big volume—"

"All wrong, all wrong, I tell you, Leach. Let's see your figures. Where's your margin of safety? Whoever told Homer Bangs to figure this job without our safety percentage? And say, what does he mean by putting in this grade of stock at eight cents a pound?"

"It cost us eight cents—"

Hiram groaned. He bowed his head in his hands and rumpled his thick white hair; then he made a gesture as of one vainly beating the air, a gesture expressing complete loss of confidence in human discretion.

"How much can you go out and buy it in the market for?" he demanded. "Can you buy a single pound, or ten tons of that stock for eight cents? Or eight and a half?"

"No, but we had a big jag of it in the stock-room—"

"And because you had it you wanted to go and sell it for less than it is worth. Well, you ain't a going to do it; not with my consent."

"But father," urged Philip, "the Middle States Printing Company has been after this contract for two years—and by figuring the stock at what it cost us instead of at the market, we can just beat their price and hold the business."

"Who said so?"

"Walker, the Badgley Company's purchasing-agent."

"Slickest duck in the business, Walker is. I've dealt with him for years. By gorry, he never put anything like this over on me! There's poor salesmanship here, Nagel. You let these fellows browbeat you."

"Well, you know, Mr. Bosworth," be-

gan Nagel lamely, "times are changing, and I felt we couldn't afford to lose that Badgley catalogue—"

"I suppose you figured we could afford to print it and make old Simon Badgley a present of our profit, didn't you? I suppose you got sorry for the poor man and kind of pitied him. Say, Peter, how long have we been runnin' a philanthropic institution for millionaire catalogue houses, eh? Now listen, boys! I'm just as willing to lose Badgley's business as I am to drop this blotter in the waste-basket, if I can't make money keeping it. If it's a losing contract, let the other fellow take it and do the losing. I'll shut this whole damned plant down before I'll consent to taking work at less than our standard profit. And let me add just one little thing that I happen to think of. If we do lose the Badgley job, I'm going to have some one's hide!"

The sales manager squirmed.

"If the Middle States outbids us, Mr. Bosworth—"

"Outbids hell!" roared Hiram. "Is there a printer in the country that hasn't outbid us time and again? How long since you boys have started worrying about bids? Holy cats! I thought if there was one house in the country that didn't have to figure every job against Tom, Dick, and Harry, it was this. When I left I had things fixed that way. We sold our product for higher prices because it was better. I thought I had this bunch educated to my way of thinking, but I guess you've all backslid. Poor salesmanship, I say."

He lapsed into thoughtful and sullen silence. His companions sat and looked at one another in embarrassment. They all believed the old man to be wrong. Times had changed, competition was keener, other printers had come into the market with good work at lower prices than Bosworth's.

"What are you fellows doin'? Thinkin' up alibis? Say, Philip, go get me a bunch of samples of jobs you've turned out in the last three months. Let's see what your competitors have managed to scare you into doing."

Philip went out and returned with a handful of different items of printed matter —catalogues large and small, circulars, booklets, posters.

"I guess you'll find they're pretty good, on the average," he said.

"Average," snorted Hiram. "Average! Since when has Bosworth's been working to an average? One bum job, one bang-up one; average pretty good. That satisfies most folks. It don't satisfy me, not by a damn sight!"

He turned over job after job, with growing contempt.

"Look," he said. "This book ought to have been done on hundred-pound stock. You used eighty. See what it did to those vignettes? Godsakes, ain't you learned the first fundamental principles of half-tone work? Tryin' to run those soft vignettes on this kind of stock—"

"The customer was pleased," said Philip. "Besides, we saved him over seven hundred dollars on the job by using the eighty-pound paper."

"There you go!" cried the old man. "Saving the customer money, and putting the Bosworth imprint on a cheap-John job. Why, I'd rather have lost all that book cost to produce than have my name on it. Yet you didn't even have sense enough to leave the imprint off, when you knew the job would be the worst backhanded advertisement that you could invent."

"If I remember correctly, Mr. Bosworth, we made a nice profit on it."

"Then you ought to be arrested," said the old man. "You skinned your customer; you got him up an alley and sandbagged him. You didn't protect him against his own short-sightedness. In other words, you prostituted the name of Bosworth—yes, by the Lord, you did! And I ain't a going to stand for it—look here."

Swiftly, he riffled through the various jobs in the bunch of samples submitted by Philip.

"Rotten," he said. Then, as each successive piece of work fell from his fingers: "poor; fair; very mediocre; bad register; say, for Heaven's sake what kind of ink did you use to get that blue?

"Now look here, boys, some one a few minutes ago said something about 'average.' Average what? Average lack of quality? That's all the average I can find. Let me tell you what you've been doing.

"First, you've let your fences get out of repair, and your competitors are ranging around like a lot of dogs in a sheep-pasture, killing off your business with 'price.'

"Second, you've let the customer browbeat you into giving him something cheaper than he had any business to buy, with the mistaken idea that he was saving money.

"Third, you've put my name on a lot of

poor stuff and busted my reputation for fine printing to smithereens.

"Fourth, whenever you've had a chance, you slipped over something on the customer, making a profit where you hadn't any moral right to a nickel.

"Fifth, I'm going to stop it, right here and now! I'm going to make you boys walk a chalk-line. Let me tell you, there's going to be some sweating around this place."

The old man stood up at his desk and leaned across threateningly. His keen gray eyes blazed with the light of battle. His white hair was rumpled into disorderly masses, his heavy under jaw thrust forward with menace.

"And now one thing more," he went on. "I'm goin' to get to the bottom of this. I'm going to find out if it's all lack of judgment, or whether it's something deeper. I'd like to believe that's all it is; but, by God, when I see a nice business like this wrecked — yes, that's what I said, wrecked—I want to tell you, my suspicions are aroused. I trusted you fellows, and you have done me dirt. I'm not accusing any one singly—but you can bet your life I'm going to get to the bottom of this mess and see who's responsible for it. I'm going to see first how bad the mess is; I'm afraid I've only scratched the surface. Now clear out of here. I want to think."

The "boys" all filed out sheepishly. So the old man couldn't be relegated so easily to a seat by the chimney-corner. You couldn't kid Hiram into letting well enough alone. He was up on his ear, was Hiram. He was a bad man when he got going—yes, sir!

Some of the help whose period of service antedated the old man's illness remembered how he used to rave when things went wrong. Once he had taken a husky pressman by the back of the neck and kicked him down a flight of stairs, because the h. p. had given him some back talk. Yes, the old man was a bad actor—unreasonable, too. He wouldn't listen when you tried to explain. He was deaf, dumb, and blind to the best alibi in the world.

V

PHILIP BOSWORTH called Desire Brown into his office one afternoon soon after this turbulent conference.

"OUTBIDS HELL!" ROARED HIRAM. "IS THERE A PRINTER IN THIS COUNTRY THAT HASN'T—

"I'm not feeling right," said Philip. "I want to go to a show and get cheered up; and I want nice company."

"Is that an invitation?" asked Desire.

"It is; and it includes dinner at any place you choose. Is it a go?"

Desire shook her head.

"I'd better not. It's very nice of you, but—"

"For goodness' sake, Desire, all you've handed me lately has been 'but.' You have developed an amazing talent for objections."

"Don't blame me, Phil; I don't want to get you in any worse trouble than you are in now."

Philip looked up, surprised. Desire was smiling.

"Yes," he said. "It is pretty fierce. The boss is down on the whole crew of us, including me."

"And me."

"You?"

"Yes, me. He doesn't approve of me in the least. I guess it was because that first

day he came into the office I didn't recognize him and show him a proper respect. I was to blame, too; men of his age are sensitive. I should have recognized him if I'd been more alert."

"Nonsense, Desire. He came plowing in here without warning, throwing a scare into everybody—and he's acted like a bull in a china-shop ever since. Why didn't he stick to golf and let us alone?"

—OUTBID US TIME AND AGAIN? HOW LONG SINCE YOU BOYS HAVE STARTED WORRYING ABOUT BIDS?"

"I guess it was about time he took a hand," ventured the girl.

"Well, look who's here!" cried Philip. "That sounds funny, coming from you. I hear the old man's been positively insulting to you."

"Hush! No such thing. Philip, the trouble with you is, you're too credulous. You let people kid you to death!"

"'Kid' isn't a pretty word for a refined young lady to use."

"It expresses exactly what I mean. Wake up, Phil; 'father was right'!"

"Now, just for that, you've got to have dinner with me to-night. I want to know what you mean. It's darned unfair to hand me all this mysterious stuff about how credulous I am, and tell me I'm asleep at the switch—what are you trying to do, make me feel like a child? Do you think I'm getting something handed to me, and don't know it?"

Desire nodded.

"Prove it," challenged Philip.

"I can't; I'm only telling you what I think. I want you to keep your eyes and ears open. Don't be so easily influenced, Phil. Have some opinions of your own—and if you can't see clearly, borrow your father's glasses for a while. He doesn't miss much. No one around here is fooling that gentleman, believe me!"

Philip Bosworth was a rather self-satisfied young man. Starting out in life with the advantage of being Hiram's son, he had found that the relationship had also its disadvantages. He was Hiram's boy, and if he gained any respect of his associates, he was never sure it was unadulterated. But after Hiram got sick and left in search of health, and after Phil had been given charge of production by Curdy, he had felt that he was standing on his own pins. He was not borrowing glory or credit from Hiram Bosworth or any one else.

To be accused, along with Curdy and Nagel, of disastrous incompetency by his father, had been humiliating enough. He was clinging to the belief that Hiram was old-fashioned, out of date, swayed by irritation at finding his pet policies overthrown by a younger generation. The stubbornness of youth and a determination to prove the old man wrong had been stimulated by

Hiram's caustic criticisms. Philip was all for Curdy and the Curdian idea. He could see nothing wrong in the methods pursued, because he believed the Bosworth business a sound and money-making enterprise—more so than it had ever been under his father's management.

And now came Desire Brown to humiliate him still further. Philip had counted on her approval. Hiram disliked Desire. To Hiram she stood for the ideas of that management which had given her the high-sounding title of "secretary," and made her, in the old man's opinion, bigger than her job. Philip did not understand why Desire failed to resent the old man's offensive attitude toward her.

"You assume too much," he said stiffly. "I should think a decent loyalty to Mr. Curdy and the management should count for something with you. If the old man had his way, you'd be dismissed. You don't seem to see which side your bread is buttered on."

"I see the difference between right and wrong, that's all. I haven't any personal feelings in the matter. Your father, even with his queer prejudices, is bigger than all the rest of us put together."

"Well, how the dickens do you know? You're only a girl; you're not supposed to understand business. It strikes me you go rather out of your way when you presume to judge in a situation you're not competent to grasp."

"Mercy me! Do you expect me to sit around like a dummy and hammer a keyboard without knowing what's going on about me?"

Desire's eyes were flashing now. Her color was a trifle heightened. The effective disorder of the unruly curls about her face was not lessened by her indignation.

Philip Bosworth looked at her, and was more than ever aware of her beauty; and back of her beauty was something finer—a resolute stanchness of character which, no matter into what mistakes it seemed to be leading her, was nevertheless an admirable trait.

"Desire, you're a wonder," said the young man. "When you're mad, you're prettier than ever. I'm sorry. I give you credit for your sincerity, to say the least."

"Any fool can be honest," snapped Desire, and went out, closing the door behind her with unnecessary violence.

Philip sighed. He certainly did love Desire—but the man who married her would have to toe the mark.

He fell to wondering why she took that attitude toward the business. Well, girls were funny. Phil knew Desire had no use for Curdy. He thought it an unreasoning dislike; but let it be ever so illogical, it explained in a way the girl's obstinate defense of his father. Of course, Curdy was thoroughly all right; but Desire would be glad to find an excuse to take sides against the man, just because of that senseless feminine prejudice.

Yes, girls were funny; and life was rather a mess. You did the best you could and builded according to your lights; and then an old has-been came along and tried to show you what a poor, cheap, and inept workman you were. Philip would never believe that of himself, never. Hiram was a wrong-headed old meddler, even if he was Phil's father.

VI

"You look worried," said Mrs. Bosworth at dinner. "Don't you think so, Mary?"

"He never ought to have gone back to that old business. Dad, why didn't you let Phil and the rest of them run it? They were doing well, weren't they?"

Hiram grunted a non-committal reply. He ate his dinner in glum silence, and his wife and daughter had learned long since to respect such moods.

"Where's Phil?" he asked.

"He telephoned he wouldn't be home to dinner; he's dining with some sort of club—a business affair, he said."

"I know; it's the Typothetæ. Lot of printers get together and yammer about their troubles. I'm a member, but I never bother to go to the meetings. Too much talk. Still, they've done some good. I'm glad Phil takes an interest. It's a wonder he doesn't get mixed up with some girl. I hope he won't think of getting married for a while; he hasn't steadied enough."

Mary and her mother exchanged significant glances.

"I shouldn't call Phil actually indifferent to the charms of the ladies," observed Mary. "I only wish he liked girls of the right sort."

"The devil!" cried Hiram. "What d'you mean?"

"Girls in his own class, of course."

"Well, now, Miss Mary, just what would you call 'his own class'? You mean girls

"IT'S ALL ON ACCOUNT OF THAT WOMAN. SHE'S HELPED HER BOSS, CURDY, TO HYPNOTIZE YOU"

with money? Brains? Social position? It all depends. If you mean you wish he'd shine up to some Fifth Avenue butterfly, I don't agree with you."

It was quite plain that Hiram was in an execrable humor; but as it happened, his daughter had been nagged all day by petty misfortunes — such as dismissing the car while shopping and then getting caught in a shower, and failing to receive an invitation to an affair that she would have given all her old boots to attend. So she welcomed with a fierce joy the prospect of a rumpus with Hiram.

"Well," she said, "would you consider stenographers in Phil's class?"

"I don't know but I would. Darn it, I've seen stenographers I thought would make mighty fine wives. Yes, if you want to know, I most decidedly think stenographers are in Phil's class, provided he's good enough to be considered in theirs."

The old man settled back in his chair and eyed his daughter with a grin of triumph. He guessed he had settled the argument, leaving nothing further to be said. Mary's aristocratic — not to say snobbish—ideas had always annoyed him, ever since she'd got back from a finishing-school.

But Mary wasn't so easily disposed of; the battle was just getting to be worth fighting.

"Well, then," she rejoined, "let's take the case of Miss Brown."

"Who the devil is Miss Brown? Good Anglo-Saxon name, I should say."

"You ought to know. She works in your office."

"Lord, how would I know? There might be six Miss Browns in my office for all—"

Hiram checked himself suddenly. By George, there was a Miss Brown! That little fluffy-haired upstart Curdy called his secretary—part of the new régime.

"What's her first name?" he asked suddenly.

"I believe it's something old-fashioned and quaint, like Prudence, or Faith, or—"

"It wouldn't be Desire, now, would it?"

"That's the one. She's rather attractive; but I suspect she's a schemer."

"Now, Mary," put in Mrs. Bosworth, "that's not at all nice of you. From what I've seen of her, she's as pretty and refined and ladylike as can be. I don't blame Phil a bit."

Mrs. Bosworth was not above recalling the days when she had sat on a high stool and stuck type in a job-printing office, somewhere in Massachusetts. She couldn't see a whole lot of social distinction between doing that and pounding the keys. The ultimate result was much the same.

Mary sniffed. It seemed she had stirred up a double opposition. She prepared for a new onslaught, and, turning to her father, opened her lips to speak. But his gaze was fixed inimically on her mother.

"Now, ma," he said truculently, "what the dickens do you know about it? Do you want Phil to go mixing up with that kind of girls?"

Mary was breathless. She had expected a spirited reply from Hiram; and now, inexplicably, he had hopped over to her side of the fence. It was incredible; but she welcomed this unexpected turn of events and pointed her weapons at the new foe.

"There, mother, you see father's agreeing with me, after all."

Mrs. Bosworth was equally startled, for Hiram, she well knew, was the soul of democratic principle. Still, it wasn't unlike him, when in a bad humor, to exhibit just such perversity.

"But you just said—" she began.

"I didn't!" cried Hiram. "Besides, circumstances alter cases. I know that young lady; and by gorry, if Phil's shining up to her, he'll hear from me, that's all! Say, what's been going on while I was away, anyhow? You've been home a good deal of the time. Why didn't you warn me?"

"Good land!" observed the baffled lady. "I thought it would please you. I thought Phil would tell you himself when he got ready. It's his business."

"Well, I'll make it my business. He'll mighty soon find that out!"

When Phil got home that night, the old man was waiting up for him.

"Come in the library and have a cigar," said Hiram. "I want to talk to you."

When the two men were settled, Hiram opened fire. He first brought up the condition of the business.

"Phil," he said, "I'm your father. I hate to see you set yourself against me down at the office. Instead of making it easy for me to untangle the mess we're in, you make it harder. What the dickens has got into you?"

"We're not in a mess, father. The business is in a good, healthy condition, and you're just imagining trouble."

"That's it, that's it," said Hiram, his temper rising. "If I hadn't come back when I did, you boys would have ruined it."

"But, father," protested Phil, "we're doing more work than ever. We're always busy; we seldom have a press stand idle an hour. Do you know how much it costs us per day to have one of those big presses stand still?"

"As if I didn't! But I know how much it costs to have 'em running on cheap, skinned, small-profit jobs, such as you fellows have got into the habit of turning out. Phil, for Heaven's sake, wake up! Can't you see the business isn't anything like what it used to be? All rush and riot and wear and tear, and the element of risk twice as great?"

"Business conditions—"

"Business conditions my eye! You never saw a time when you couldn't find people who would pay big prices for the best work. You boys have tried so hard to meet competition that you have actually attracted it. Lord! I never worried about competition. What I put my mind on was, first, selling the stuff right, then turning it out right. That's a competition your competitor can't meet.

"Say, what has become of all the stock we used to keep on hand? Don't you boys keep any paper ready for the presses any more? Do you buy from hand to mouth, like any piking little printer? If you do, you're not getting the best prices."

"That's not in my department, dad; but in a general way, I believe Curdy has thought the market didn't warrant keeping much money tied up in stock. Prices might take a slump—"

"Have prices taken a slump in the last three years?"

"Not that I know of; but—"

"You're passing the buck, boy. You let Curdy shunt you off into a job with a high-sounding title, and that satisfied you. You're my son; you ought to have displayed more force. Great Scott! I taught you the game; why let Curdy dictate the policy of the house?"

"He doesn't. But the business had to be departmentalized. That's the way to get efficiency. It's the modern idea—"

"Leach Curdy's idea, that's what it is. I know the efficiency game as well as you, young man; but I'm beginning to believe Curdy's put the fish into it. Things ain't right, I tell you, they ain't right. If I could get a little help, a little cooperation, I'd soon show you where the holes are. Why, that business is as full of leaks as a sponge."

"Dad, that's calamity-howling."

The old man groaned and beat with a clenched hand upon the side of his head.

"It's that damned woman," he said suddenly.

"Woman? What do you mean?"

"The Brown girl, Curdy's stenographer—secretary, he calls her. I hated her the minute I set eyes—"

"Now, father, you quit. I don't stand for that kind of talk. Desire Brown's the finest girl in the world. And let me tell you—"

"You can't tell me anything!" roared Hiram. "Ever since I walked into the office two weeks ago, everybody's set themselves against me. Say, Phil, do you realize that it's my own business, which I built up from nothing, and which I turned over to you boys to manage for me while I got my health fixed up? Now I'm back, and every one treats me like a superannuated old fossil. I'm defied and opposed and cheated—"

"You talk like a wild man, dad."

"I am a wild man—I'm damn wild. I'm half crazy. Sometimes I wish I'd stayed away and let you fool-headed youngsters go your own gait. But I couldn't. It's in my blood; besides, let me tell you something. All I've got is tied up in the business. I never laid aside a cent of personal funds—always put my profits back into the Bosworth Press. All that I have now is what the business earns. The dividends 'll stop pretty soon, and then where'll your mother and I be—and Mary?"

"The business is all right, I tell you, father."

"And I'm an interfering old fool, eh? I knew you felt that way before I'd been in the office half an hour."

Hiram bowed his head in his hands and groaned. He was pitiful—a great hulk of a man, full of sound strength and the power that comes with maturity; yet now he was baffled, because of the opposition of a son who wrong-headedly persisted in blinding himself to facts.

"I'll show you," cried the old man, getting to his feet suddenly. "I'll show you! I've got to do it alone—my own son won't turn a hand for me. God, Phil, if you'd only see it would be for your own good to put your shoulder to the wheel—but you won't. I say it's all on account of that woman. She's helped her boss, Curdy, to hypnotize you."

"If you say another word about that girl, dad, I'll leave the room. I can stand your accusations of incompetency and inefficiency and bad judgment—I know you're wrong, and we've run the company right; but I don't have to listen when you talk that way about Desire, and I won't."

"I'll say anything I please about her, the pert little upstart." Hiram began to mimic Desire's first polite demand, made on that morning of his return: "'*Who shall I say wants to see him*'?"

"Good night, father," said Phil quietly.

He was in a towering rage. His father was so unjust, so unreasoning, so actually malicious in his attitude toward Desire. Phil might have said that Desire, alone among those competent to judge, was in sympathy with the old man. But what was the use? He was too angry to give his father the satisfaction of knowing that any one agreed with him. He slammed the library door behind him and stumped off grumpily to his room.

(*To be concluded in the December number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

THE GALATA QUARTER OF CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING ACROSS THE GOLDEN HORN FROM STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE

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Constantinople, the Key City of the Near East

ITS LONG AND DRAMATIC HISTORY, ITS IMPORTANCE AS ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT STRATEGIC POINTS, AND THE PUZZLING PROBLEM OF ITS FUTURE CONTROL

By Frederic Austin Ogg

Professor of Political Science in the University of Wisconsin

RETURNING to his tent from one of the anxious interviews with Czar Alexander I which preceded the treaty of Tilsit, Napoleon instructed his secretary, M. de Méneval, to lay before him the largest map of Europe that could be secured. The two sovereigns had agreed, in principle, upon an alliance, and upon a division of the European world between them. In ecstatic contemplation of the proposed arrangement, the emotional Czar had embraced his brother monarch, exclaiming:

"What is Europe? Where is it, if it is not you and I?"

There had been but one hitch. Alexander had insisted that Russia should have Constantinople. To bring about the realization of this age-long ambition he had shown himself willing to pay any price. Napoleon had demurred, and was now retiring to consider his final answer. With map outstretched, the conqueror—already master of most of the countries depicted — gazed at its features long and thoughtfully. His decision lacked nothing of definiteness.

"Constantinople! Constantinople!" he exclaimed, pounding the table with his fist. "Never! It is the empire of the world!"

No student of history needs to be told that the great city on the Golden Horn, together with the narrow straits which constitute its gateways, has been a chief storm-center of international politics for five hundred years, that it was the direct origin of many of the wars fought in the nineteenth century, that it has perhaps cost humanity more in anxiety and bloodshed than any other single spot upon earth.

Not only that, for one of the main things that the world has been fighting about in the great war recently ended—the future historian may say *the* main thing—is Constantinople. It was the chronic question of the Near East that tempted German imperialism to launch its great assault upon

THE GENERAL POST-OFFICE OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A HANDSOME MODERN BUILDING AMONG THE OLD STREETS OF STAMBOUL

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the peace of the world. In this many-sided Near Eastern problem, the most important element was the control of the straits—the Bosporus and the Dardanelles; and the

INTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA—ALL FIGURES AND CHRISTIAN EMBLEMS IN THE ANCIENT MOSAICS ARE COVERED WITH GOLD-LEAF AND PAINTED CANVAS

crux of the question of the straits was the possession of Constantinople.

For generations men have endeavored, by all the arts of diplomacy, by all the devices of political combinations, and by all the violence of wars, to untie the Near Eastern knot; but the results arrived at have been only makeshifts grounded upon suspicion and hatred. Perhaps it is too much to hope that even the greatest of all wars and the most comprehensive of all peace agreements will bring the problem to a full and final solution. There is, however, at present an opportunity to make of Constantinople somewhat less of a breeding-ground of rivalry, covetousness, and conflict than it has been in the past; and the United States, in common with all non-

EXTERIOR OF THE MOSQUE OF ST. SOPHIA, OR HOLY WISDOM, BUILT AS A CHRISTIAN CATHEDRAL BY THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN IN 532-537

imperialistic peoples and nations, has a very live interest in seeing that this is done.

The first thing to be noted about Constantinople, historically, is that it is peculiarly a product of its environment. The English made London, and the French Paris; geography made Constantinople. The original city, Byzantium, was founded in the semimythical ages by the swarming, adventurous sons of Greece, because they perceived the strategic value of the site for trade. And in A.D. 328, when the Emperor Constantine ordered the conversion of the old Greek settlement into "New Rome," the eastern capital of the far-flung Roman Empire, he selected it, rather than any of the other towns with which the eastern Mediterranean lands were dotted, because it excelled them all in the beauty of its location and in its adaptability for purposes of war, communication, and political leadership. A recent writer says:

> Situated where Europe and Asia are parted by a channel never more than five miles across, and sometimes less than half a mile wide, placed at a point commanding the great waterway between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the position affords immense scope for commercial enterprise and political action in rich and varied regions of the world. The least a city in that situation can claim as its appropriate sphere of influence is the vast domain extending from the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf, and from the Danube to the eastern Mediterranean.
>
> Moreover, the site constituted a natural citadel, difficult to approach or to invest, and an almost impregnable refuge in the hour of defeat, within which broken forces might rally to retrieve disaster. To surround it, an enemy required to be strong upon both land and sea. Foes advancing through Asia Minor would have their march arrested, and their blows kept beyond striking distance, by the moat which the waters of the Bosporus, the Sea of Marmora, and the Dardanelles combine to form. The narrow straits into which the waterway connecting the Mediterranean with the Black Sea contracts, both to the north and to the south of the city, could be rendered impassable to hostile fleets approaching from either direction; while on the landward side the line of defense was so short that it could be strongly fortified, and held against large numbers by a comparatively small force.
>
> Nature, indeed, cannot relieve men of their duty to be wise and brave, but in the marvelous configuration of land and sea about Constantinople nature has done her utmost to enable human skill and courage to establish there the splendid and stable throne of a great empire.

Constantinople, therefore, is to all intents and purposes an impregnable city, because of the nature of its immediate environs. Through a period of sixteen hundred years

THE MOUTH OF THE GOLDEN HORN, OR HARBOR OF CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING FROM THE GALATA TOWER, SEEN IN THE ENGRAVING ON PAGE 210, TO SERAGLIO POINT, THE EXTREMITY OF THE PENINSULA ON WHICH STAMBOUL LIES, AND ACROSS THE BOSPORUS TO THE ASIATIC SHORE

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it has been captured only twice by a foreign foe, and the costly failure of the Allies' Dardanelles campaign in 1915-1916 demonstrated afresh its invulnerability. It is also a city situated to command, or at all events to influence greatly, the intercourse, whether peaceful or warlike, of the entire world. It dominates the only possible water outlet of Russia and Roumania to the Mediterranean; it lies athwart the great historic routes of trade between southern Europe and western Asia; it is a chief vantage-point on the Titanic railway lines, built or projected, by which India, China, and the rich world of the Malay states are to be linked up with the Near East and with Europe.

When the Channel Tunnel and the proposed bridge from Constantinople to Scutari are completed, it will be possible to take a through railway carriage from Charing Cross to Berlin, Vienna, Belgrade, Constantinople, and Aleppo, and thence to Bagdad—presently to Bombay, and no doubt eventually to Cairo and Cape Town, or to Calcutta and Madras, or even to Shanghai and Canton.

THE DRAMATIC STORY OF OLD BYZANTIUM

The second cardinal fact about this wonder city is the richly dramatic character of its history. The story falls into two main chapters, according as it relates to events before or after the Turkish conquest of 1453.

In the first era the place rose from a petty trading-station to the most populous, the strongest, the most beautiful, and the most cultured city in the world. Beginning, in Constantine's day, as an Eastern capital coordinate with Rome, it became, after the dissolution of the Western Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries, the sole capital; and for almost a thousand years it enjoyed, as the heir of Rome, not only the political, but also the religious, headship of the great Greek-speaking and Greek-thinking world eastward from the Adriatic to Persia.

Here, in imposing ecumenical councils, was wrought out the theology of the undivided church, and also the ecclesiastical system which still holds sway wherever the Greek Orthodox faith prevails. Here were developed the first principles of Byzantine art, which has in all later ages been more influential upon ecclesiastical architecture than any other. Here, while western Europe groped in ignorance, were preserved in cloisters and libraries the finest fruits of ancient learning and letters. Here were nursed the world-famous teachers whose dispersion in Italy and elsewhere made possible the glories of the Renaissance. Here was framed that remarkable Justinian Code, which, as a digest and compendium of the great body of Roman law, survives and dominates in all subsequent legislation.

So vast, indeed, were Constantinople's cultural contributions that it may be said with truth that no city ever wielded such an influence upon the course of human affairs except Athens, Rome, and Jerusalem; and, as all students of history know, even the gifts which these rivals showered upon civilization often bear a Byzantine image and superscription.

Beset by internal weaknesses and by external foes, the empire of which Constantinople was the head and center showed phenomenal power of survival. Eleven dynasties of Christian rulers came and went in proud succession. The Arabs stripped off Syria and Egypt; the Seljuk Turks took most of Asia Minor, and as early as 1080 planted the crescent at Nicæa, within sight of the battlements of the capital; and, after swaying back and forth for two hundred years, the contest of Crusader and Infidel went finally against the former.

But it was only in the fifteenth century, when the dread Osmanlis, or Ottoman Turks, already masters of most of the Balkan peninsula, turned their full force against the imperial city, that the day of final eclipse came. On May 29, 1453, the hapless Emperor Constantine XIII was slain as he defended the last rampart of his capital; and from that hour the Turk ruled the city and all that was tributary to it.

At that hour, too, the Near Eastern question was born. For the essence of that question is the possession of the key city on the straits by a people akin to the European family neither in race, in creed, in speech, in social customs, nor in political traditions and aptitudes. For five hundred years Turkish power on the Golden Horn has meant for Europe a problem, now tragic, now comic, now bordering almost on burlesque, but always paradoxical and baffling.

After the capture of Constantinople, Ottoman power rose rapidly to its zenith. The whole of the eastern basin of the Mediterranean—the Ægean islands, Egypt, Syria, and the northern coast of Africa—

THE CITY OF MOSQUES AND MINARETS—VIEW OF STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE, LOOKING FROM THE GALATA QUARTER ACROSS THE NARROW WATERS OF THE GOLDEN HORN

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SERAGLIO POINT, LOOKING FROM GALATA ACROSS THE MOUTH OF THE GOLDEN HORN—THE WHITE BUILDINGS ON THE POINT ARE THE SERAGLIO, FORMERLY THE PALACE OF THE TURKISH SULTANS, BUT ABANDONED AS A ROYAL RESIDENCE SINCE 1839

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THE IMPERIAL MOSQUE, WITH TURKISH TROOPS DRAWN UP FOR THE CEREMONY OF THE SELAMLIK—THIS TAKES PLACE EVERY FRIDAY, WHEN THE SULTAN GOES FROM THE YILDIZ PALACE TO THE MOSQUE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

was brought under the yoke, and all central and western Europe was threatened. Thirteen times Solyman the Magnificent (1520-1566) marched through the capital's gates at the head of an army on some distant campaign; thirteen times he returned in triumph.

Turkish rule fell on the old Byzantine cities and lands like a pall. The new masters were, in reality, only a small, exclusive, alien governing class, whose management of affairs blended inefficiency, cruelty, corruption, and tyranny in equal degrees. The Christian population, although protected to some extent in life, occupation, and property, was reduced to tax-bondage; the free political spirit of earlier days was crushed out; culture was allowed to languish.

More than any other part of the former empire, Constantinople reflected the character of the new and unhappy order. With its name changed to Stamboul, its churches converted into mosques, its government made the prey of scheming pashas, and its trade deflected into other and safer channels, the city fell from its once proud position and saw its glories pass to Rome, London, Paris, and other western rivals. Such trade and prosperity as it kept arose entirely from its location and its traditional connections. The Turk, then as now, ignorant of the first principles of political economy, placed obstacles of every sort in the path of its development.

THE DECLINE OF THE TURKISH POWER

As early as the reign of Solyman, which is generally accounted the noontide of Ottoman greatness and prosperity, the seeds of decay were sown; and in the sixteenth century the empire entered upon the long and steady decline which has brought it to its present pass. The disaster at Lepanto, in 1571, broke its sea-power forever; the failure to take advantage of the distractions of the Christian nations during the Thirty Years' War betokened a loss of energy and initiative; the relief of Vienna by the brilliant exploit of the Polish king, John

Sobieski, in 1683, not only saved the Austrian capital, but completely freed Europe from the terror by which, for two and a half centuries, it had been oppressed.

Never again was Christendom really menaced by Turkish arms. On the contrary, the Christian peoples began to recover the ground that had been lost, and everywhere the Turk was put on the defensive.

The problem of repelling the Ottoman onslaughts was, however, quickly superseded by another problem almost equally alarming and decidedly more intricate—the disposition to be made of the territories successively wrested from the Sultan's control, including eventually Constantinople itself. For a long time—certainly throughout the eighteenth century—it was assumed that the inheritance would devolve upon one or more of the great powers, most likely Russia. Serbians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Roumanians, and the other submerged nationalities of the reconquered lands were

RUINED REMAINS OF THE ANCIENT THEODOSIAN WALL, BUILT IN THE FIFTH CENTURY TO PROTECT CONSTANTINOPLE ON THE LANDWARD SIDE

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A CEREMONIAL PROCESSION ENTERING CONSTANTINOPLE BY ONE OF THE GATES IN THE THEODOSIAN WALL

not expected to have any voice in the decision reached.

The nineteenth century, however, put an entirely new face on the situation. Led by the Serbs and the Greeks, the Balkan peoples rose in rebellion, asserted their right to separate political organization, and took honorable places in the family of nations. The great powers were forced, not only to recognize them as costates, lawfully possessing large sections of the former Ottoman dominion, but as free agents whose wishes must be consulted on the question of the ultimate disposition of Constantinople itself.

Successive wars, treaties, and understandings brought it about that by 1914 only eleven thousand square miles of Turkish soil in Europe—an area less than one-fourth that of the State of New York—remained to be disposed of. At first glance, the Near Eastern question seemed therefore to have been largely solved. When, however, it was recalled that this remaining Turkish territory included Constantinople and the lands bordering the straits, it became apparent that only the fringes of the problem had really as yet been touched.

The situation on the eve of the world war was complicated in the extreme.

THE QUESTION OF THE STRAITS

In the first place—assuming the continuance of Turkish sovereignty in Europe—there was the question of revising the highly contentious "rule of the straits." It is a general principle of international law that a strait dividing the land territory of a single state, which is not too wide to be commanded by shore batteries, forms part of the territorial waters of that state. The riparian state has exclusive control, unless the strait forms a necessary international highway, in which case all nations have a right to send their war-ships and merchantmen through it on legitimate voyages. The Bosporus and the Dardanelles, therefore, are Turkish waters; but, constituting an international highway between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, they would be open, barring special arrangements, to the war-ships and merchant craft of all peaceful nations.

The actual status of these two important passages is, however, determined by convention, and does not conform to the

ONE OF THE TWO PONTOON BRIDGES ACROSS THE GOLDEN HORN, CONNECTING STAMBOUL, OR OLD CONSTANTINOPLE, WITH THE NEWER QUARTERS OF GALATA, THE BUSINESS CENTER OF THE TURKISH CAPITAL, AND PERA, THE CHIEF FOREIGN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

general rule. The Ottoman government long undertook to exclude both the war-ships and the merchantmen of other states from use of the straits, at all events except by license. Such restrictions became intolerable, and at length the powers obtained treaties under which war-ships were not allowed, it is true, to pass through the straits, but merchantmen were expressly permitted to do so. This "rule of the straits," arising in the eighteenth century, found confirmation in the treaty of Paris in 1856, the treaty of Berlin in 1878, and many other nineteenth-century agreements.

The arrangement was at best a compromise, and it never gave satisfaction.

STREET SCENE IN PERA, THE CHIEF FOREIGN RESIDENTIAL SECTION OF CONSTANTINOPLE—A BODY OF TURKISH MARINES IS SEEN ON THE MARCH

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

A TYPICAL TURKISH STREET IN CONSTANTINOPLE—THE TURKS STILL BUILD MOST OF THEIR HOUSES OF WOOD, AND THEIR CAPITAL HAS BEEN SCOURGED BY MANY DISASTROUS FIRES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

The United States acquiesced in it, but refused to recognize its legal validity. Russia was, of course, the nation most vitally affected, because the rule completely bottled up her Black Sea fleet. During the war with Japan she evaded the restriction by sending cruisers through the straits in the guise of merchantmen; and she repeatedly put forth every endeavor—now combining with the Central Powers, now going to the aid of the Balkan states, now negotiating with the Porte directly — to bring about its abrogation. The rule still stood in 1914; but nothing was clearer than that the Near East would continue to be a troubled scene as long as it did so.

All this, however, was on the assumption that the Sultan's government would continue to hold sway in Constantinople and its environs. But whether this would be the case was extremely doubtful, even before 1914. The Sick Man was assuredly never in a worse way than at the opening of the present century; the revolution of 1908

afforded but temporary relief; the Balkan wars of 1912-1913 brought his demise manifestly nearer; no one could tell in 1914 what sudden turn of events might mean the end.

In this situation the old question of who should have Constantinople took on a new importance. Certain states openly eyed the city covetously; many others had no hesitation in letting it be understood that they expected to have a hand in its disposal.

A CHAOS OF CONFLICTING CLAIMS

The oldest and most natural claimant was Russia. If the Russian people of modern times have been impregnated more deeply with one idea than with any other, it is that their country has a right to the succession of the Greek emperors, and that Constantinople must and will be Russian. Alexander I made this dominating national desire clear to Napoleon more than a hundred years ago, and at no time has the grand object been lost to view.

The Russian claim is based partly on sentiment, and partly on an aspiration to recover for the Orthodox Church its historic seat, but mainly on economic and political considerations of a very practical character. Before the great war more than half of the total water-borne commerce of the country flowed to and from the ports of the Black and Azov Seas by way of the straits. Theoretically, this passageway was open and free. Practically, it was obstructed by arbitrary and vexatious regulations, and it was liable at any time to be closed by either the Turks themselves or by any of their numerous enemies.

Twice in the three years preceding the war the Dardanelles was shut against all traffic, with the result of shattering the prosperity of the great port of Odessa, and of cutting Russia's foreign trade in half. To obtain a great ice-free port, an independent outlet to the southern seas, and freedom to move their war-ships at will as other nations do, the Russians felt that somehow, some time, Constantinople must be made theirs.

A second state that has hoped to acquire the City of the Straits is Greece. The Greek claim is based partly on history; and it must be admitted that historical rights to the place, whatever they may be worth in these days, are possessed by Greece alone. In addition, Constantinople had, in 1914, a Greek population of more than two hundred thousand, and Greeks entered prominently into most phases of the city's life.

It was difficult to argue, however, that Greece had any practical need of the place. Her maritime position was unexcelled without it, and no vital economic interest was involved. Nor was the ethnical argument convincing, for, after all, Greeks formed but one-fifth of the total population.

To tell the truth, each of the Balkan states looked on Constantinople as in some way its heritage. Roumania had the same economic reasons for desiring to possess it that Russia had, for it was the gateway to her only seaports. Bulgaria, although already controlling an ice-free port south of the straits, cherished a futile dream of possession, and especially hoped to see the ambition of Russia thwarted. Even Serbia watched the whirligig of politics in the hope of discerning a chance to plant her authority at the coveted spot.

GERMANY'S GREAT DREAM OF EMPIRE

Meanwhile a remoter state was doing more to establish actual, if not formal, control than all others combined. This was Germany.

So long as Bismarck remained in power, the Berlin government disclaimed any interest in the Near Eastern problem; but William II took an entirely different attitude. Friendship for the Turk was ostentatiously avowed; Austria was encouraged in her efforts to secure access to the Ægean; a great plan of empire was laid out stretching from Hamburg and Berlin *via* Constantinople to Bagdad and Basra; the Bagdad Railroad was carried almost to completion; and the army, the finances, and the foreign policy of the Sultan were brought entirely under German control.

Had the Pan-German *drang nach Südösten* been permitted to work itself out completely, the Turk would doubtless have remained the nominal possessor of the straits, but Germany would have been the authority there with which all other states would have had to deal. William II, no less than Napoleon, believed that Constantinople meant the rule of the world.

The great war—more specifically, Turkey's entrance into it—brought the long-standing issue to a head. Great Britain and France would have preferred to see the settlement go over until the Turk and his allies had been brought to their knees; but the Russians saw their advantage and pro-

SHIPPING AND BOATS ON THE BOSPORUS, THE WATERWAY CONNECTING THE SEA OF MARMORA WITH THE BLACK SEA, A STRAIT EIGHTEEN MILES LONG AND FROM HALF A MILE TO TWO MILES IN WIDTH

posed to make the most of it. Although not all of their authoritative spokesmen were agreed that the annexation of Constaninople was desirable, there was little or no dissent from the view that permanent and effective Russian control must be established over the straits; and the acquisition of Constantinople itself was quite generally advocated.

THE HIPPODROME OF CONSTANTINOPLE, WITH TWO EGYPTIAN OBELISKS ERECTED BY THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE, WHO MADE THE CITY HIS CAPITAL IN THE YEAR 330

The upshot was the secret tripartite agreement of March 4, 1915, by which Great Britain and France assented to Russia's annexation — in the event of a successful termination of the war—of not only Constantinople, but both the European and Asiatic shores of the Sea of Marmora and of the straits, on condition that Russia should accept certain demands of the two western powers relative to the future of other parts of Asiatic Turkey, and also of Persia. These demands were eventually defined and mutually agreed to in a series of secret conventions signed in 1916, providing for a general partition of the Sultan's Asiatic dominions among the three allies; and from that time until the revolution of March, 1917, the acquisition of Constantinople and the straits was steadily put forward at Petrograd, in rescripts of the Czar and otherwise, as one of Russia's primary aims in the war. After the revolution the current of opinion veered, and territorial aggrandizement was openly renounced by the provisional government.

Acceptance of the program embodied in the treaties meant for both Great Britain and France, especially the former, a sharp reversal of policy. Lord Palmerston, and many another nineteenth-century worthy of Downing Street, must have turned in their graves. For three full generations a cardinal object of British diplomacy had been to keep Russia from establishing herself on the straits, lest she should use that vantage-point as a base of aggression upon British imperial interests. The fear was by

no means groundless, yet it was doubtless exaggerated, and it sometimes begot a wrong-headed policy. After the Anglo-Russian entente of 1907 it was considerably relaxed; and in 1915 necessities of war proved sufficiently urgent to cause it to be waived altogether.

The decision was supported, too, by commercial and industrial considerations. The new business intelligence of both England and France realized the material advantage of developing Russia, providing her with proper outlets, and organizing the enormous volume of her potential trade. Many European firms saw themselves rich as a result of the establishment of the Muscovite at Constantinople.

The failure of the Dardanelles campaign and the unexpected stubbornness of Turkish resistance kept the coveted territory out of Allied hands until the armistice; and the collapse of Russia not only threw the entire question into the Paris conference—as, indeed, must have happened in any case—but created a new set of conditions for its solution. Had Russia remained in the war to the end, Great Britain and France would have found their hands tied at Paris on the straits question, precisely as on Fiume and Shantung. As matters turned out, there was hardly any subject which the negotiators could take up in greater freedom from previous commitments.

The problem as it presented itself to the Peace Conference was substantially this. Assuming—as was stipulated in President Wilson's fourteen points and accepted as axiomatic by all the Allied belligerents—that the straits were to be made "permanently free to all ships," what political authority should be entrusted with responsibility for protecting and enforcing the new régime? Obviously, this involved the questions whether the Turk should continue to rule at Constantinople, and, if not, who should be his successor.

Two things were clear — first, that if the Turk were left in power,

THE TCHERAGAN SERAI, ONE OF THE SEVERAL IMPERIAL PALACES ON THE SHORE OF THE BOSPORUS—LYING IN THE FOREGROUND ARE TORPEDO-BOATS OF THE ALLIED NAVIES

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

his control over the straits must be put under new restraints; second, that, however advantageously the principle of nationality might be applied in fixing the status and delimiting the frontiers of Alsace-Lorraine, Czechoslovakia, Poland, or Schleswig-Holstein, it was of no avail in solving the problem of Constantinople and its environs. The motley population of the region absolutely refuses to support any claim based on considerations of race.

THE VALIDI MOSQUE, ON THE SHORE OF THE BOSPORUS, WITH TURKISH TROOPS GUARDING THE QUAY ON THE OCCASION OF A VISIT BY THE SULTAN

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

Roughly estimated, the area—including Constantinople — which the secret treaty of 1915 earmarked for Russia contains 1,450,000 people. Of this number, only 600,000 — not forty-three per cent — are Turks. About 300,000 are Greeks, 200,000 are Armenians, 75,000 are Levantines, 70,000 are Jews, 30,000 are Bulgarians, the remaining 175,000 include representatives of almost every people under the sun. The only feasible grounds on which to fix the future status of the region, therefore, are economic necessity and political stability—a circumstance which may not lighten the present task, but which, perhaps, increases the chance of a solution that will be just and permanent.

THREE POSSIBLE SETTLEMENTS

What settlements of the problem are possible? The proposals that have come from statesmen, diplomats, and writers are legion. Speaking broadly, they can be reduced to three main plans:

First, to leave the Turks in possession, but with stronger guarantees of the rights of other peoples to use the straits.

Second, to bestow the city and its appurtenant lands upon some non-Turkish power.

Third, to neutralize the region and bring it under international control.

The first plan meets with little favor. When, early in the war, Mr. Asquith declared that the conflict must put an end to two evils, the domination of Prussian militarism and the rule of the Turk in Europe, he struck a responsive chord; and the world has had no reason to change its mind on either subject. As guardian of the straits, the Porte has been an utter failure. Its insolent action in admitting the German war-ships Goeben and Breslau into the Dardanelles in the autumn of 1914, and aiding and abetting them in their operations against states with which Turkey was not at the time at war, was but one of a long series of flagrant violations of its international engagements.

The reiterated promises of the present ministers that if Turkey is not dispossessed the straits will henceforth be open to the world without restriction are not worth the paper on which they are written. Reestablishment of Turkish sovereignty, no matter what conditions were imposed, would merely start again the wearisome round of threats, interventions, conflicts, political combinations, and wars which has centered in the straits question for seventy-five years.

The second main proposal is to turn over Constantinople and the lands immediately bordering Marmora and the straits to some Christian power, either to be annexed outright or to be administered as a free port under a national flag. Russia is, of course, the state commonly in the mind of those who support this plan; although the present condition of that country raises doubt, even in the minds of the annexationists, as to the practicability of the scheme. Some suggest that the territory should be bestowed on Greece; one or two writers have proposed that it should be placed under the rule of Belgium.

The third plan — internationalization — has been much more widely supported; indeed, public sentiment may be said to be overwhelmingly for it in all the Allied countries. If adopted, it would mean the end of exclusive domination of the straits by any one power. Instead, the waterways would be open at all times to ships of every kind and of all nations; the internationalized area would be strictly neutral in time of war; probably fortifications and military works would be forbidden, as they now are in the Strait of Magellan.

Obviously, the success of such a régime would require the constant vigilance and active administration of some organized and powerful authority. Two main proposals here arise. One is to place the neutralized region under the jurisdiction of an international commission similar to the very useful Danube Commission created by the treaty of Paris in 1856, and to the Kongo River Commission authorized at the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885. The other suggestion is to entrust the region to a single power—the United States has been mentioned in this connection—to be administered under a mandate of the League of Nations.

The outcome of the mandatory plan is problematical; but, judging by the experience of the Danube Commission and of various other international agencies of the kind in the past fifty years, much might be hoped for from an international commission, providing that it were so composed as not to be dominated by powers having peculiar interests at stake. An English writer has suggested a governing board of three members, an American, a Dane, and a Swiss, chosen by the signatory powers from a body of nominees five times as numerous; and perhaps no better suggestion can be made.

What of the Sultan, if any of these newer plans is adopted? This is for the Peace Conference to say; but his continued presence at Constantinople would obviously be incompatible with either the annexationist or the internationalizationist program, and therefore, without much doubt, he will have to go, bag and baggage. With Armenia, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, and Arabia presumably lost, there will be only one place for him to go—to Asia Minor; and there, where six or seven million people of pure Turkish blood await reorganization under a stable government, is his logical abode. Konia, the ancient Iconium, now a principal station on the interior stretches of the Bagdad Railway, dominates the most purely Turkish sections of the country; and there, it is reasonable to expect, the new Ottoman capital will be located.

In this remote and uninviting spot the heir of the lordly Solymans and Mahmouds, shattered in prestige, shorn of his empire, and bereft of his magnificent capital, will have no lack of food for bitter reflection.

A Song of Home

BY JACQUES BELDEN

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

I THINK there is no place in the world where the wind sings out of the storm the way it sings at Shanhanarragh. When the clouds are whirling up over the marshes in thick, smoke-black drifts, and the drowning gray of the rain creeps nearer across the meadow-land, then the voice of the wind comes suddenly twisting through, in a soft, sweet melody that rises as the storm rises and dies as the storm dies, until its last note melts away in a breath, like the end of a smile.

Around the age-worn house they call Castle Hanarragh the song is strangest and sweetest of all. In the tower-room, where half the stones hang loose in the walls, and the wooden rafters are old and rotting, and the high, narrow windows stand open to the bare sky, a man can sit and listen to music of which he has never heard the like—listen as long as it will ever last, and not grow tired.

Old Keirle O'Dare says so, and I think he knows. No matter how or when the storm begins, he is always there, and he sits and listens as if to a voice he loves, and never goes away until the last low note has softened into silence.

Keirle O'Dare! Lord of Castle Hanarragh, they called him, although he is no more a lord than the old stone house on the hill at Shanhanarragh is a castle. But with all of that they named him well, for he had a lordly way with him when he was young, a way that made men tremble and grow pale and yet at the same time be glad to do his will.

He was descended, he said, from the O'Dares of Keenlanarran—from the long line of proud, hard old soldiers who had lived so fast and fought so easily and died so gladly that at last there was only one left to bear the name. And that one was Keirle O'Dare himself—a younger son of a younger son, yet none the less one of them, and as proud and brave as they. His father and his father's father had dwelt at Shanhanarragh, and so he dwelt there, too, and when he married a little stormy-eyed girl from the west it was to Castle Hanarragh that he brought her home.

There she lived a year, and her eyes and the storms that came out of the marsh-lands were of the same color, and changed with the same swift fearsomeness, and Keirle O'Dare was happy. At the end of the year she died.

A wretched man was Keirle O'Dare when he saw her die. Yet even in his wretchedness the spirit of the O'Dares within him flamed into joy. For the baby she had died to give him was a boy—with the straight, clean limbs and the fighting mouth of his fathers—a boy to carry the line of heroes farther on through the ages of the world. So Keirle wept and smiled, and called his son Dare O'Dare, after the first who had ever borne the name.

It is easy to imagine how young Dare O'Dare grew up at Shanhanarragh. Child of a wild race of riotous fighters, son of a wild and riotous father, who left him alone for months together while he rode off to God knows what adventures in the west country, young lord of Castle Hanarragh, with none to curb his will or teach him gentleness or care for him, without even a memory of the mother who had breathed once to show him how and then had breathed no more, and with no path to follow except that path the O'Dares had worn —how could he grow into anything but another of the old, wild stock?

Well! He was as different from the old, wild stock as southern sunshine is from the cloud-haunted daylight of the north.

'Tis true he had their looks—the straight mouth and chin, the heavy eyebrows and lashes, the black, black hair—and he had their furious frown, too, when he was puz-

zled or hurt. But wait until he'd turn his black-gray eyes on you, and then you'd see the difference. The light of them, the colors of them, the golden dreams of them, would be like something you've maybe seen in some place far off, where music and love and laughter live, but never before up there in the marshes where people hate and fight and die.

And he'd smile—he'd smile the wonderfulest way—like a summer sunrise that will warm the grayest landscape into a glow of joy. Once you'd seen him do that, you'd never wonder at all to find him so quiet and soft-spoken, always readier to laugh than to quarrel, and friendly with all, whether they dwelt in Shanhanarragh or only happened to pass that way.

With all the swearing and cursing he'd heard about him from the day he was born, never a word of it did his lips learn to echo, and with all the fighting and carousing Keirle and his crowd did there and roundabout, never once did the boy try to follow in their way. But the things he chose to do were things he could hardly have heard of, unless out of books; and how he came to know them, and to want them—well, that's a mystery the like of a miracle.

A few years he went to school in Balmarcham, and it was there that somebody gave him the violin and taught him something of how to play it. After once he'd begun, it was only a short while before he knew its ways and its voice better than ever his teacher had known or dreamed of knowing; and presently he cared for nothing else. The tower-room at Castle Hanarragh was his, and it's there he'd sit for hours together, calling the music out of the strings and hearing it come to his call, and learning the meaning of happiness, I have no doubt.

A bitter day it was for Keirle O'Dare when he knew at last the kind of son he had fathered. In seventeen years he had not learned it, for he was a fierce man and masterful, and could not think that any would go against his will, surely not his own son. What hadn't he done for him? He had given him horses and firearms, and taught him to ride and to shoot, and he had even talked to him sometimes, though he'd never listened for the answer. But a day had to come at last when he heard, for the hundredth time, the soft song of the violin, and, hearing it, realized all of a sudden how 'twas inside that little wooden box with the strings across it that his boy's heart lay, and not in the free air of the riding or the fury of the battle, where the name of O'Dare is a terror and a wonder to this hour.

Just how he felt at first I don't know, or how long he swore and cursed and smashed things in his house before he grew calm enough to speak so one could understand him. But the end and last of it was, I know, that when he'd told young Dare O'Dare in forty different kinds of damnation what an unholy error of a son he was, and when he'd ordered him, in his furious voice that well-nigh shook the stone walls apart, to burn his violin to ashes in the fireplace, then Dare O'Dare stood up before him as no other man of Shanhanarragh had ever had courage to, and said:

"If it's the violin or me must go, father, then it's myself that goes," and never another word.

And when old Keirle drew in his breath for another blast of the curses he'd been learning those fifty years long, the boy just shoved the fiddle under his arm, and off down the way he went, with only the clothes he wore and the little money in his pocket that Darrel Rohane, the servant in the stable, ran after him to slip into his hand.

A storm was on them that day—near always there's a storm at Shanhanarragh—but Dare O'Dare walked down through the village and out to the open road, with never a fear in his face or a look behind him. His father stood in the gateway at Castle Hanarragh, cursing him fit to frighten the angels in heaven, but all the time with a terror and an ache in his own heart that you could almost see with your eyes.

II

So that was the way the boy went. And when he was gone, Keirle O'Dare lived there by himself in the old house, and fifteen years passed by. In all that time never a word came from the son—never a word of whether he died along the road in the storm, or, if not, where he went to and what he did.

Strangers came and went in Shanhanarragh more and more, for the miracle they call the motor-car kept bringing them, and there was no turning them away. But of all the strangers, never a one could speak a word of Dare O'Dare, until finally Darrel

HE TOLD YOUNG O'DARE IN FORTY DIFFERENT KINDS OF DAMNATION WHAT AN UNHOLY ERROR OF A SON HE WAS

Rohane and the others were weary and out of heart with asking, though they never stopped.

Keirle O'Dare grew old and rheumatic, in the years, and bitterly he lamented that he had not died in battle or in debauch, like so many of his race. The laws got sharper, too, what with the motor-cars running in and out among the hills and marshes, and he could not have ridden and rioted as he was used, even if he had kept his strength. So he came to sit at home alone, often listening to the storms, and cursing over the fire, and thinking of no man knew what.

So time turned over the pages until it brought old Keirle into one wild day in the March of 1916. Sitting by the fire that day, he cursed in every way he had ever learned the fate that had brought the great war too late for him. With a blasphemous heart he sorrowed—not because the world was torn and bleeding, but because he was too old and worn to help in

the tearing and the bloodshed, and because no man of the O'Dares was left to take his place. Not once in all his wicked talk did he mention his son, yet I have no doubt 'twas over the thought of him and what he might have been that the old man's soul was twisted and racked.

It had come along to that time of the afternoon when the daylight is nearly worn out, and the dark fingers of night were beginning to stretch over Castle Hanarragh, when a little motor-car crawled up the hill and stopped just by the gate. Out of it, as if he had been some guest they were expecting, there stepped a man—a tall man with hair the color of daffodils, and a happy, smiling face. He carried a big, square box with a rubber cover over it, and, carrying it, he walked into the room where the fire blazed before Keirle O'Dare.

"An' who are you?" said Keirle, looking up with a frown as hard as the very stones his house was built of.

"Me?" said the man, answering the frown with the cheerfulest smile that room had ever seen. "I'm Tom Cross, and I've come direct from America, by way of London and Dublin." And he put the box on the table and wrung the drops of rain from off his face and hands.

"Well, whoever you may be, come up to the fire and dry yourself, then," said Keirle O'Dare. "But tell me at once what you will be wanting with me."

For he was always dreaming, was Keirle, that one day they'd be sending for him to come and fight in the great war, though well he knew they never would.

"Well, I'll tell you at once," said Tom Cross, and glad he was to sit down before the blaze; "for I can see you're no man to trifle with. I've come here to sell you a phonograph—something you will surely want in this lonely place. A phonograph, you know," he went on, for Keirle kept as silent as a frozen stream, and Tom Cross got thinking maybe he did not understand, "a phonograph is a very wonderful machine. It will reproduce for you the music of all the great artists—artists of the voice, the piano, the violin—"

He stopped, for the fire flamed up and showed him Keirle's face, twisted and knotted with anger.

"Music!" said Keirle, and his voice was buried deep in his throat. "Artists! Violin!" And he broke off with a choking and a gasping.

"Sure!" said Tom Cross, but startled he was for all his laughing way. "Why not?"

In a minute or two the old man managed to swallow down whatever it had been in his throat to choke him, and then he spoke in a voice deadly quiet.

"There is never a one of them," said Keirle O'Dare, "never a one of those you call artists, that spend their good lives with this moonstruck music stuff—there's never a one of them, I say, but what's a black curse to his country and to the father that bore him. Can they ride?" he cried out, sudden and loud. "Can they fight? Will they go into the wars and strike and kill like men? They will not! They're no men at all. They're nothing. Nothing!" he ended, in almost a whisper.

He said all this like a man that knows it well, but of course he had no knowledge of the ways of musicians. Because his son had been the like of that, he'd swear they were all the same. That was the way of Keirle O'Dare.

Tom Cross sat there a minute, studying the old man, and then he said, easy and calm, as if 'twas little account to him one way or the other:

"I have heard that some of them are different."

"You've heard? A lie!" cried the old man.

"Maybe not a lie," said Tom Cross, same as he'd spoken before. "Only the day I left London we got the news about André Delmour."

"And what of this André Delmour?" old Keirle cried, full of fury at being contradicted. "Who is he, then?"

"Who is he?" exclaimed Tom Cross. "Oh, my dear sir, a man that owned a phonograph would never have to ask that question. André Delmour," he said, and a queer way he said it, something like speaking a piece you've learned from a book, "is one of the greatest violinists of modern times. He first attracted attention in the year 1908, when he played, at a concert in London, a little interlude of his own composing called 'A Song of Home.' A great impresario happened to be in the audience, and in an ecstasy of delight he summoned the young violinist and engaged him on the spot. From that moment André Delmour rose rapidly, until in 1912, when he made his tour of England, France, and America, he was acclaimed as one of the world's greatest virtuosos. His fame

was thereafter secure, both as composer and player. His first composition, his 'Song of Home,' is perhaps the most popular. Although he has played it hundreds of times, it is said that he never plays it twice alike, always introducing some slight variation which adds to its beauty."

Just for breath he stopped, and old Keirle stormed out:

"Well, and what is all that? Bah! The same old tale!"

"Wait!" said Tom Cross, and now he spoke not out of a book, but out of his own heart, as a good man should. "I've heard him. I've heard him twice. Generally I don't feel much, but when he played 'A Song of Home,' I knew what music ought to mean. Well, he was in London when

"WHO WOULD THERE EVER BE IN THE WORLD WITH A VIOLIN TO TAME THE WIND AND MAKE OUT OF IT A SONG OF HOME, EXCEPT ONLY DARE O'DARE?"

the war broke out. He'd signed for a big concert tour around the world. Thousands of pounds were waiting for him. And what did he do? Chucked it all over like water, he did, and went and joined up—joined up as a private soldier."

"He did that?" said Keirle O'Dare, and why he shivered I don't know.

"He did," said Tom, "and he went to the front. And he kept in the middle of the fighting, and was cited for bravery, and got crosses and medals so fast that it might have been snowing them. He was promoted and wounded and promoted again, until only last month they made him a major. I've heard, too, that he had his violin with him, and would play for the boys whenever he got a chance. They always asked for 'A Song of Home'—especially the wounded; and I've heard the way he played it in camp or in the hospital was better than he'd ever done on the stage. He composed some, too. He sent back one piece, 'The Song of the Shells,' that somebody played before the king in London, and the papers all raved over it. The only thing it needed to make it perfect, they said, was to have him come home and play it himself."

"He did that?" said Keirle O'Dare again, as if he couldn't believe it at all.

"He did," said Tom Cross. "And now, sir, if you have no objections, I'll set up this little sample machine I've brought to show you, and let you hear an exact reproduction of 'A Song of Home,' as played by the great violinist, André Delmour."

III

He slipped the cover off the box and set the phonograph up on the table. Through the dark that had grown around them old Keirle stared at the thing, but never a word did he say. A twist of the hand and 'twas all ready, and then Tom Cross started it off and went back to his chair by the fireside.

For a second or two there was no kind of sound in the air except just that sighing and sobbing a phonograph always begins with, as if it's telling you how sorry it is it can't do better. Then, quick and clear and soft, came a few piano chords with spaces of stillness between them. Chords that called you, they were—just called you and stopped.

Quite gone was the last echo of the last one of them before the voice of the violin began to sing.

"A Song of Home"! Is there any one alive that's heard it and forgotten, or ever will forget? Oh, the golden dream of the soul of you, André Delmour! Oh, the

miracle and glory of the song of your violin!

Tom Cross sat back with the glow of the fire upon him, warm and content and smiling, his eyes half shut; but Keirle O'Dare, the hard shadows hiding his face, sat up straight, waiting and frowning, till the first notes came to him.

Sweet and strange those first notes are, and very soft, like the beginning of a little wind away off by the far hills' edges. And out of them rises a melody, all vague and wandering, half lost—a melody, men say, that brings you close to remembering dear, gone things you've loved and forgotten. Little by little it changes then, the way you'd hardly know 'twas changing, till all at once it swells in upon you like a sudden great rush of rain coming from over the marshes, and bringing you know not what, and all to throw down at your feet.

When he heard that, old Keirle moved for the first time and drew in his breath sharp, as if a sting was in the throat of him. But before he could speak or breathe again, the song turned wild, the way it does, and raged, and broke with the desperate crash that's in it—and never the like of it in music before. Then Keirle O'Dare gave a hoarse cry and lifted his arms above his head, and his eyes flamed like lightning in the darkness.

Tom Cross sprang to his feet and caught the old man in his hold.

"What's happened? What is it?" he said.

"'Tis my son!" cried the old man, struggling. "'Tis the voice of my son!"

"No, no, it's only a music-box," said Tom Cross, pretending to laugh.

But Keirle flung him away with a strength he'd not known for years.

"Listen!" he cried. "'Tis the song of the storm above Shanhanarragh. I've heard it my life long here—how should I not know it now? Oh, many's the day I've heard Dare O'Dare trying to prison it in his violin!"

He caught Tom Cross by the arm and dragged him to the stairs.

"Come up!" he shouted. "Come up to the tower and hear it once, and then tell me if I lie."

Tom Cross—and a brave man he was in that hour—just smiled and went up to the tower. Up the age-worn stairs he went, with Keirle O'Dare, mad and raving and pulling him by the arm.

Once in the tower-room, where the windows stand open to the sky, the old man hushed all of a sudden and loosed his hold and stood there with his finger on his lip. Tom stood silent, too, and listened, and the wind sang through the storm the way it always sings at Shanhanarragh.

Tom says he'd never believed there could happen anything so strange, not even in Ireland.

For the song of the wind, up there among the loose-hanging walls and the rain-drowned trees, was the very voice and melody he'd heard only a moment before coming from that phonograph box below stairs, the very voice and melody of André Delmour's violin and his "Song of Home." He's a man of few fancies, is Tom Cross, yet he swears 'twas so.

The old man watched him listening, and saw his cheek grow pale and his smile fade out for the first time since he came; and he laughed, did Keirle O'Dare.

"'Tis true! You'll not deny 'tis true!" he cried. "Ah, there's no other place in the whole world where the wind in the storm makes music the like of this! And who would there ever be in the world with a violin to tame the wind and make out of it a song of home, except only Dare O'Dare, son of Keirle O'Dare of Castle Hanarragh?

"He was not afraid to fight!" cried Keirle. "Music he made when 'twas music time; but when fighting time came, then only the noise of the battle was music to him. I beg his forgiveness," the old man went on, a great glow of joy in his eyes. "I misjudged him, and I beg his forgiveness. 'Tis not too late! You know where he is this hour, and it's you will take me there to the battle-fields to find him."

He stood then, gasping for breath, and a coldness came over Tom Cross. He moved back near the stairs as if he was frightened.

"Look here," said Tom Cross, and of a sudden his way of speech grew strange and craftylike, as if he was trying to persuade Keirle O'Dare back into anger against his son once more. "If André Delmour is really your son, look how he's treated you. He's thrown aside your name—the old, old name you're so proud of." He watched the old man's face as he said it, to see if it would not cut him. "And more than that, he's forgotten and neglected you in

all the honor and prosperity that's come upon him. Would you forgive him that?" demanded Tom Cross, anxious, as if it mattered to him.

"Forgive him, do you say?" cried Keirle O'Dare, and at the sob and the rapture in the voice of him the heart of Tom Cross sank like an icy weight in his breast. "Would he be Dare O'Dare if he'd kept his father's name, once his father had cursed him and cast him off? Or, with the fighting soul of his race inside him—and it is there, now I know it is there!—would he be coming back to me to show the honor and the glory he'd won by his violin, the same time he could remember the way his violin and all the wonders he could work with it were a horror and a damnation to me? He would not! He could not! Man, you come from the great, rich land of the west, and you do not understand. But we know—Dare O'Dare and I."

Tom Cross did not answer.

"He has suffered and sorrowed for Castle Hanarragh and me," moaned Keirle. "Can you not hear his sorrowing there in the 'Song of Home'? Many's the day his heart has been racked with the longing to feel the rain and the wind of Shanhanarragh against his face, and to hear the voice of his father calling him Dare O'Dare. But how could he ever come back at all, without first I'd go to him and beg his forgiveness and tell him I was wrong? You *will* take me where I can find him!" cried the old man again, in the voice that he had used so many years to make other men do his bidding.

"Wait—wait till I tell you," said Tom Cross, hesitating.

"Wait, is it?" urged Keirle. "No, no! Take me where he is. You will take me?" he pleaded, and 'twas a new thing, indeed, to hear the lord of Castle Hanarragh plead with any man.

"Hush, now," said Tom Cross, and a very sober face was on him then. "Hush till we're back by the fire, and I'll tell you."

And old Keirle went with him like a child, and all the time the wind in the storm and the fiddle in the box singing the "Song of Home" together, and none to say which was which.

By the fire once more, Tom Cross just said, simple enough:

"I told you, sir, that only the day I left London we got news of André Delmour."

"The news that he'd been made a major!" cried the old man, eager and happy.

Tom shook his head.

"The news that he was killed," he said.

For a minute Keirle O'Dare sat up straight in his chair, the great eyes of him staring out of the white of his face at Tom Cross.

"Is it killed?" he said at last. "Is it killed? And him Dare O'Dare—my son!"

"I'm sorry," said Tom Cross; for 'twas all he could think to say.

IV

If you should go now up there into the marsh country, folk would point to Keirle O'Dare for a man whose wits are gone. 'Tis wandering and wild he must be, they'd tell you, for he sits all day alone, with hardly a word for any one who comes by. Always in a storm he'll be up in the tower-room—the room that was Dare O'Dare's fifteen years and more ago—listening to the song of the wind over Shanhanarragh. And when there's no storm to comfort him, then 'tis the little square box of a phonograph he'll set up on the table, and over and over again he'll listen to "A Song of Home."

A TWILIGHT VISION

As soft as in a dream
To me you came;
Out of the dusk I heard
You call my name.

So swiftly did you go
I did not hear;
I only turned to see
That grief stood near.

Harold Vinal

Rudyard Kipling and His Place in Literature

THE ACHIEVEMENT AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A MANY-SIDED GENIUS WHO HAS BEEN A PANEGYRIST OF PATRIOTISM AND A POET OF EMPIRE, AND WHO IS ALSO A MOUTHPIECE OF AMERICA AS WELL AS OF BRITAIN

By Richard Le Gallienne

HENRY JAMES, in an early appreciation of Rudyard Kipling's writings, which was a striking illustration of his own literary catholicity, referred to "the particular property that made us all so precipitately drop everything else to attend to him." The phrase is vividly and truthfully descriptive of the manner in which, so to say, Mr. Kipling first hit literary London; for his sudden and swift arrival was a very unmistakable jolt to the literary fashions then prevailing.

The times were decidedly "precious." We were in the midst of a rather hectic aftermath of Preraphaelitism and the "esthetic" movement. The labels "decadent" and "*fin de siècle*" were the prevailing catchwords, and "strange sins," and peculiar "soul-states," and "artistic temperaments" were in vogue. It was the heyday of Oscar Wilde and Aubrey Beardsley, of Paterian and Stevensonian prose. "Style" and "distinction" were our only wear. Also the cults of the poster, the music-hall, and the short story were at their height. The *Yellow Book* was being published in Vigo Street, and the Rimers' Club was meeting at the Cheshire Cheese. In short, it was the eighteen-nineties.

It is not necessary to depreciate those stirring times, as surely I would be the last to do, in order to emphasize the singularity of Mr. Kipling's paradoxical arrival among them. There was a genuine artistic vitality in them, which has not only left behind some notable work, becoming more seriously recognized as time goes on, and the picturesque memories of certain ill-starred men of talent, if not genius, but which is, at the moment, perhaps too potently alive and influential in that new wave of "preciousness" wherein we are at present engulfed. Indeed, the despised and rejected of the eighteen-nineties have become, it is to be feared, almost too much the chief corner-stones of contemporary movements and manifestoes.

However, "that," as Mr. Kipling first taught us to say, "is another story." Mr. Kipling's influence has had a long innings. If those influences which he temporarily overwhelmed are now to have theirs—well, it takes all sorts to make a world. Of one thing we may be gladly certain—the iron and quinin with which he has so plentifully dosed us will remain in the blood of the younger generation, and will serve to correct any threatened fevers of luxurious "hedonism." No recent writer can so confidently apply Whitman's words to himself, in addressing his contemporaries, and say:

> You will hardly know who I am or what I mean,
> But I will be good health to you, nevertheless,
> And filter and fiber your blood.

Leaving artistic considerations aside for a moment, Mr. Kipling's moral influence on his day and generation has been of an importance which it is scarcely an exaggeration to call prophetic. Few writers have ever come so precisely in the nick of time. If a voice crying "England hath need of thee" had summoned him, he could not have been more pat to the occasion. Wordsworth's "stern daughter of the voice of God" has seldom been in greater need of a candid friend and servant. But how whimsically characteristic of the times it was, too, that that mouthpiece of the ancient verities should come in the guise of an

RUDYARD KIPLING, POET OF PATRIOTISM, PREACHER OF DUTY AND DISCIPLINE, AND MOUTHPIECE OF THE BEST SPIRIT OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING RACES

From a recent photograph—Copyrighted by the International Film Service, New York

Anglo-Indian teller of tales, the banjo-minstrel of Tommy Atkins and *Supi-yaw-lat!*

And surely, at first, no one dreamed what this cock-sure *enfant terrible* was to mean to the British Empire in particular, and to the morale of the world in general. His guise was certainly anything but prophetic, and his accents anything but reverential. Other-worldliness—of which he has essentially a great deal—was the last quality you would attribute to him. On the contrary, a queerly acrid worldliness, an omniscient cynicism, and a jarring brutality, made the peculiar tang of this strange, new fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. One's first reading of him was like one's first experience with olives. Some people never learn to like olives, and some people—lovers, too, of the best in literature—have never quite learned to like Rudyard Kipling. There is something in him that still frightens them.

MORE THAN A TELLER OF TALES

But the fruit that Mr. Kipling brought us, even in that first astonishing volume of "Plain Tales from the Hills," was more subtly blended in flavor than any olive. It had, indeed, every kind of flavor, and was not without an odd touch of the nectarine. Among all his other experiences, its author had not missed the honey of Preraphaelitism, was not unacquainted with the *Lady Lilith,* and could put Rossetti's "Song of the Bower" into the mouth of his drunken acquaintance, *McIntosh Jellaludin.* And, while on one page we would find him lyrically celebrating "the hunting of man," what exquisite tenderness we would find on another—lover tenderness, mother tenderness—and what noble and touching pity for the sorrows and frailties of his fellows! With all his uncanny and precocious knowledge of the world—so many different worlds—his somewhat overdone and distasteful knowingness, and along with his apparent cold-bloodedness of observation and accent, there went, in unaccustomed association, so deep a sense of the tears in mortal things that one soon realized that here was something more than a diabolically clever teller of tales, and that, in fact, we were safe in the hands of a deep and serious poet.

As a matter of fact, with a precocity paralleled in nineteenth-century literature only by that of the young Charles Dickens, Mr. Kipling had for some time enjoyed a considerable reputation as, so to say, the "Boz" of Anglo-India. He had been sub-editor of the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette* at the early age of seventeen. Many of the "Plain Tales" were already familiar to readers of that journal long before they set the Thames on fire, as was much of the satirical verse later published as "Departmental Ditties." Six slender paper-covered volumes of "Wheeler's Railway Library," which had been published at Allahabad at a rupee apiece—at present, in the estimation of collectors, worth their weight in gold—had contained such masterpieces as "Soldiers Three," "The Story of the Gadsbys," "In Black and White," "Under the Deodars," "The Phantom 'Rickshaw," and "Wee Willie Winkie." And their author was not yet twenty-four!

Such was the considerable literary baggage which had preceded him to England, when he arrived there, to find himself famous, in 1889. On his way there, at the end of two years' holiday travel through India, China, Japan, and America, he had written sketches of his journey for his Indian papers, the *Civil and Military Gazette* and the *Pioneer,* and these sketches were afterward published under the title of "From Sea to Sea." Though Mr. Kipling deprecated their book publication, his readers will scarcely share his regret; for, apart from their intrinsic merit as picturesque pieces of observation, they provide many interesting side-lights on his imaginative writings.

THE MAKING OF "MANDALAY"

Occasionally, indeed, they have the value of raw material, which one is able to compare with the subsequent artistic product. This is particularly the case with Mr. Kipling's notes on his visit to Burma. Here is a quotation, the significance of which the reader will not be long in grasping:

> Now we are lying off Moulmein in a new steamer which does not seem to run anywhere in particular. Why we should go to Moulmein is a mystery. . . . Moulmein is situated up the mouth of a river which ought to flow through South America, and all manner of dissolute native craft appear to make the place their home. . . . Strictly in confidence I will tell you that Moulmein is not a city of this earth at all. *Sindbad the Sailor* visited it, if you recollect, on that memorable voyage when he discovered the burial-ground of the elephants.
>
> As the steamer came up the river we were aware of first one elephant and then another hard at work in timber-yards that faced the shore. . . . There was a strong scent of freshly sawn teak in the air—we could not see any elephants sawing—and occasionally the warm stillness was broken

by the crash of the log. . . . We saw upon a hill a large white pagoda surrounded by scores of little pagodas. . . . I should better remember what that pagoda was like had I not fallen deeply and irrevocably in love with a Burmese girl at the foot of the first flight of steps. Only the fact of the steamer starting next noon prevented me from staying at Moulmein forever and owning a pair of elephants.

Leaving this far too lovely maiden, I went up the steps only a few yards, and, turning me round, looked upon a view of water, island, broad river, fair grazing-ground, and belted wood that made me rejoice that I was alive. . . . Far above my head was a faint tinkle, as of golden bells, and a talking of breezes in the tops of the toddy-palms.

And now, of course, we have all the material ready for the alchemic "projection" into—

By the old Moulmein pagoda, lookin' eastward to the sea,
There's a Burma girl a settin', an' I know she thinks o' me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, an' the temple-bells they say:
"Come you back, you British soldier; come you back to Mandalay!"

Seldom is it possible in so interesting a fashion to place a masterpiece side by side with the material out of which it grew, and watch the transmutation, so to say, in process, as in the case of this most magical of all Mr. Kipling's poems—"Mandalay." Of course, the watching gives us no clue to the process. The magic remains magic. We see the waving of the wand—as in the case of Coleridge's "Kubla Khan," mysteriously created from the note of another Oriental traveler—but that is all. How it has waved a piece of average good descriptive prose into a poem to haunt us forever remains pure necromancy.

I don't think we have had any literary excitement since to compare with the thrill of the first appearance of the "Barrack-Room Ballads," as they were published in W. E. Henley's somewhat truculent but very alive and distinguished weekly, the *Scots Observer*—afterward called the *National Observer*. To have read "Mandalay" there for the first time is something worth remembering, and "Danny Deever" and the "Bolivar," and all the rest—for a while, a masterpiece each week to look forward to.

TEN AMAZINGLY FERTILE YEARS

The publication of the ballads in volume form, in 1892, immediately gave Mr. Kipling a second world-wide fame as a poet. In addition to confirming him as the minstrel of the British soldier, it introduced him as a singer of sailors' chanteys, too—chanteys of the engine-room, in particular—one of his interests to find its most notable expression a little later in "McAndrew's Hymn." Also, such poems as "The Flag of England" and "East and West" gave him the position he has ever since held of unofficial laureate to the British Empire—a position finally sealed as his by that solemn national hymn, the "Recessional," first published in the London *Times*, on July 17, 1897, on the occasion of Queen Victoria's second jubilee.

He was still in his thirty-second year, and in the interval between the "Recessional" and the publication of "Barrack-Room Ballads" he had achieved a third variety of fame by his "Jungle Book" (1894) and "Second Jungle Book" (1895), a double series of mystical beast-stories, which, after his manner, had been foreshadowed by the strangely fascinating story, "In the Rukh," published in the collection of "Many Inventions" (1893). In 1891 "The Light That Failed," his only book in the conventional form of a novel, had revealed his power from another angle, and provided an actor of genius, Sir William Forbes Robertson, with one of his finest rôles.

Other products of that amazingly fertile ten years were "The Seven Seas" (1896), one of his finest volumes of poems; "Captains Courageous" (1897), "The Day's Work" (1898), "Stalky & Co.," a story reminiscent of his own school-days (1899), and "Kim," by some considered the high-water mark of his genius, a deep and tender romance of an old Hindu sage, in 1901. When "Kim" was published, it was barely twelve years since Mr. Kipling's landing in England, fourteen since the English publication of "Plain Tales from the Hills." It was an amazing record, both for the average quality and for the variety of its achievement. There was not a dead spot in it. On the contrary, it was alive with surprising new departures all through, and no single one of these various volumes had failed to give evidence of its author's genius and to enrich his readers with some memorable piece of work, with its own unforgetable, characteristic stamp upon it. It had revealed to us many Kiplings. We might like one more than another, but each one was a masterful individual, very much himself and no one else.

For the last fifteen years—"the years

between "—Mr. Kipling would seem, for the most part, to have been resting upon his laurels, as, after such a record, he surely has every right to do; preoccupied with the bringing up of his children and with his duties as a citizen. For those children, and everybody else's children, he has written "Just So Stories" (1902), "Puck of Pook's Hill" (1906), and "Rewards and Fairies" (1910); and from time to time he has made challenging poetic comment on British affairs and the trend of political events generally. Through ballad and folk-lore and fairy tale he has been teaching his children the sweetness of English soil and the greatness of English history and character:

> Take of English earth as much
> As either hand may rightly clutch.
> In the taking of it breathe
> Prayer for all who lie beneath—
> Not the great or well-bespoke,
> But the mere uncounted folk
> Of whose life and death is none
> Report or lamentation.
> Lay that earth upon thy heart,
> And thy sickness shall depart.

He has been doing the same for colonial and Anglo-American grown-ups in such poems as this, "The Recall," the epilogue to the significant story, "An Habitation Enforced," in "Actions and Reactions" (1909):

> I am the land of their fathers,
> In me the virtue stays;
> I will bring back my children,
> After certain days.
>
> Under their feet in the grasses
> My clinging magic runs;
> They shall return as strangers,
> They shall remain as sons.
>
> Over their heads in the branches
> Of the new-bought, ancient trees,
> I weave an incantation,
> And draw them to my knees.
>
> Scent of smoke in the evening,
> Smell of rain in the night,
> The hours, the days, and the seasons
> Order their souls aright;
>
> Till I make plain the meaning
> Of all my thousand years—
> Till I fill their hearts with knowledge,
> While I fill their eyes with tears.

It need hardly be said that one of the first notes to be struck by Mr. Kipling, a note that has reverberated as from an iron string through all his subsequent writings, has been that an Englishman's first duty is his duty to England. "Keep we the faith!" From first to last he has been an incorrigible Britisher, and in his case there seems never to have been a shadow of those Gilbertian temptations to belong to other nations. Least of all has he ever shown the smallest inclination to be an internationalist. In that famous envoy to "The Seven Seas," in which he expresses his creed as an artist, he has told us that in the happy hereafter for artists, "when the oldest colors have faded and the youngest critic has died"—

> . . . Only the Master shall praise us, and only the Master shall blame;
> And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work for fame;
> But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his separate star,
> Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things as They Are!

From first to last the god he has served, with a prayerful devotion which gives all his work a curious seriousness, even solemnity, has been the God of Things as They Are; and, when you come to think of it, what other God is there? Under another name, such was the deity of another modern writer who seems very different from Mr. Kipling, but from whom, I conjecture, he has drawn no little inspiration — George Meredith. "Sacred Reality," Meredith called his divinity. "Smite, Sacred Reality," he cries in the anguish of "A Faith on Trial"; and when we can say that in sincerity, he adds, "we have come of our faith's ordeal." Meredith and Mr. Kipling alike are fiercely impatient of sentimental evasions of the facts of existence, and though, perhaps, far from agreement on details, are alike intolerant of half-baked social and political panaceas, both having gone to school to that wise spirit which teaches us to discriminate between true idealism and its spurious, sophomoric imitations.

A BELIEVER IN DUTY AND DISCIPLINE

For this reason Mr. Kipling is by many regarded as a reactionary—a label, it is to be feared, which must be patiently accepted by all such who do not swallow wholesale those nostrums of contemporary lawlessness and disorder which parade variously under the names of progress and revolution.

Mr. Kipling has an old-fashioned belief in duty, and in the discipline which enforces it, and makes it second nature. "He did not know," he says of his *Brushwood Boy*, "that he bore with him from school and college a character worth much fine gold." Character—that is the old-fashioned quality which again and again he holds up

for our admiration in his mute, inglorious heroes, and possibly he writes sometimes a little too much as if it was an exclusively British possession.

For, in spite of his having, in Barrie's phrase, swaggered in bad company over so many continents, he is the least cosmopolitan of writers. He is nothing if not patriotic —that antique virtue which our internationalists are doing their best to ridicule and destroy. It was already, in many intellectual quarters, being superciliously depreciated as insularity, and so forth, when Mr. Kipling first " smote 'is bloomin' lyre." Perhaps, for some, the recent war, with its fearful menace, may point an old-fashioned moral in Mr. Kipling's favor; and those who study it, and who are following, too, the recent developments among the various new peace-born nations, may hesitate before exchanging it for the blessings of the " internation."

In fact, Mr. Kipling is, both by temperament and by conviction, a Tory. Among other Tory beliefs he holds that a man is a man and a woman is a woman, and would seem to take little stock in the present-day confusion between the sexes. We know his opinion of the " female of the species," but we must not forget his many tender stories about women, nor his weakness for that little Burmese maiden on the steps of the pagoda at Moulmein, and, above all, his " Mary, Pity Women." After all, chivalry is an older institution than woman suffrage —though personally I find it impossible to understand the reasoning that would deny complete political enfranchisement to women.

But it is not necessary to agree with the whole of a writer to be glad of him, and this is especially true of Mr. Kipling. One may, indeed, often violently, disagree with him, for his work is very much of a challenge to his time, yet admire and give thanks for him all the same. Perhaps as one grows older and better acquainted with the works and ways of his God of Things as They Are, one is inclined to agree with him more rather than less; nor need the doing so imply our senectitude, for we must recall that Mr. Kipling thought the same at twenty as he does now, that his young shoulders were born with a strangely old Tory head upon them. He saw the Thing as It Is from a very early age; and, when we say that, we must not forget that it was far from being only the seamy side of it that he saw. He saw that, indeed, with strangely precocious eyes, but it was as nothing in his vision compared with the power and the glory, the wonder and the mystery, which he also saw, and which no man of our time has seen with clearer, more passionate, or more worshipful seeing.

KIPLING AS A LITERARY CRAFTSMAN

I have said more than enough of Kipling, the moralist and patriot. Let us return to that other Kipling—those other Kiplings—who embodied, or rather infused, that morality and patriotism, with so little suspicion of medicinal intent, in magical story-telling and masterful, swinging music.

I have recently read Mr. Kipling through again from beginning to end; but I found that, so far as refreshing one's memory was concerned, there was scarcely any need for that most pleasant enterprise. Alexandre Dumas scarcely " remembers " better. As I came to the title of each story—the best of the stories, at all events—I recalled it at once, knew whom I was going to meet and what was going to happen. All that remained, for the most part, was to taste again the way of the telling—to test the magic, in fact; and, when you know a story in advance, it is no little of a test, let me assure you. There are, I will admit, some old favorites on whom one hesitates to try it. No sacred names mentioned, but—well, it has been wonderful and comforting to find how well Mr. Kipling has borne that test—how well he wears.

I tried first one of the earliest thrills he ever gave me—the first, I suppose, he gave any of us—the story in " Plain Tales " called " Thrown Away," which ends with those awful flies, that awful murmur of flies. It is the story of the boy who had been brought up under the " sheltered life " theory—the young subaltern who had taken his gambling debts seriously and gone out into the jungle and blown his brains out; and how his brother officers found him, having first heard " the *brr-brr-brr* of a multitude of flies "; and how they found a letter to his mother confessing all, and promptly tore it up, and, with comradely loyalty and gentleness, concocted another very different one; and how they buried him and said the Lord's Prayer over him, and so on. Yes, though I had been expecting them all through—and though they have been imitated since, how often!—turned into tricks by so many inferior

hands, for " all have got the seed "—when I came to the flies, I found the same grim " creep " awaiting me. Such remains the remarkable illusion of the telling.

And it was the same with " Beyond the Pale "—that little native girl, you remember, whom the Englishman unwisely loved, and with her arms, at the last, thrust out through the grating into the moonlight—both hands cut off at the wrists!

And, again, it was the same with " At the End of the Passage," and " The Gate of a Hundred Sorrows," and " In the House of Suddhoo," and through all the books it was the same. " Without Benefit of Clergy," " The Mark of the Beast," " The Man Who Was," " The Man Who Would Be King "—one unforgotten story after another. Not one of these, nor any of the well-remembered rest, failed me. The magician's carpet, as on my first delighted journey, had once more carried me, in a twinkling, to—

The oldest land wherein the powers of darkness rage.

The strange smell of India was in my nostrils, and once more I lay under the spell of its brooding, ancient terror and its tarnished magnificence. As before, too, I wondered at the literary craftsmanship which produced these effects with so little betrayal of itself, with an utter freedom from conscious art, by some hypnotic suggestion of atmosphere infused into the plain, straightforward English, by the unconscious operation of the clear-seeing imagination of the teller—teller, rather than writer. For the sense of writing is curiously absent from these vivid incantations of the pen.

KIPLING'S WONDERFUL RANGE

I found, with a special gratitude, that the same was true also of the humorous stories. " Soldiers Three " no more failed me, on renewed acquaintance, than their great prototypes, the *Musketeers* of Dumas, fail us. The laughter of *Mulvaney, Ortheris,* and *Learoyd* was the same honest, earth-born laughter as at first. " The Courting of Dinah Shadd," " My Lord the Elephant," " The Incarnation of Krishna Mulvaney," were as exuberantly funny and human as ever. Again, too, *Mowgli* came walking toward me down the dried bed of the stream, the same strange and lovely apparition, with the wreath of white convolvulus about his brows; and, as once more I came to the end of " Kim," I put the book down with the same sense of hallowing tenderness that had spread its hush about me at the first reading.

The same man who had written of the " Night Mail," that glorification of modern mechanism, who had seemed to rub his hands in " On Greenhow Hill " over the " hunting of man," and had cried out, " Give 'em hell, O give 'em hell! " with *Dick Heldar,* had written of this most touching of all pilgrimages, of that exquisitely tender love between the old priest and his little gamin companion, had dreamed the dream of the River of the Arrow. It was a wonderful range for one man to have, and it is the spirit that animates " Kim " that is the soul moving behind and through all those other interests and gifts.

Then I turned to the " Barrack-Room Ballads," and found the very dross and slag of language transmuted into rainbows, into the fine gold of tragedy and pathos and humor. To what fine issues had the old music-hall convention been touched; and what gusto and joy and anguish of life danced and laughed and cried, and swept and marched and jigged us along in all that spirited singing! What chanteys have ever had in them such swing and roar and tang of the sea as " L'Envoi ":

There's a whisper down the field where the year
has shot her yield,
And the ricks stand gray to the sun,
Singing: " Over there, come over, for the bee has
quit the clover,
And our English summer's done."
You have heard the beat of the off-shore wind
And the thresh of the deep-sea rain;
You have heard the song—how long, how long!
Pull out on the trail again!

And who else has put into words so enthrallingly what perhaps the finest of the many who have taken Mr. Kipling for their master has named the " call of the wild," as in " The Feet of the Young Men ":

So for one the wet sail arching through the rainbow round the bow,
And for one the creak of snow-shoes on the crust;
And for one the lakeside lilies where the bull moose waits the cow,
And for one the mule-train coughing in the dust.
Who hath smelt wood-smoke at twilight? Who hath heard the birch-log burning?
Who is quick to read the noises of the night?
Let him follow with the others, for the Young Men's feet are turning
To the camps of proved desire and known delight!

He must go—go—go away from here!
On the other side the world he's overdue.

Send your road is clear before you when the old spring-fret comes o'er you
And the Red Gods call for you!

Among the variety of those gifts here very cursorily surveyed, Mr. Kipling has another of great usefulness for the man who, either as moralist or poet-publicist, would influence his times—a happy talent for inventing homely symbols and catchwords to illustrate and popularize his message, or to provide a rallying-cry or formula for some attitude of the general mind that is in the air at a particular moment.

NEW MESSAGES FOR NEW DAYS

Such has been "Take Up the White Man's Burden," and "The Sons of Martha," a scathing satire on all those intellectuals and idealists who talk and theorize and dream, while the practical men whom they loftily patronize do the hard and necessary work of the world:

They do not preach that their God will rouse
them a little before the nuts work loose.
They do not teach that His Pity allows them to
leave their work when they damn well choose.
As in the thronged and the lighted ways, so in the
dark and the desert they stand,
Wary and watchful all their days that their
brethren's days may be long in the land.

And the Sons of Mary smile and are blessèd—they
know the angels are on their side.
They know in them is the Grace confessèd, and
for them are the Mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they
see how truly the Promise runs;
They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and—
the Lord He lays it on Martha's Sons!

A sort of postscript to this, a delightful bit of irony called "Mary's Son," occurs in Mr. Kipling's last book, "The Years Between," the latest fruitage of his many-fruited tree:

If you stop to find out what your wages will be
And how they will clothe and feed you,
Willie, my son, don't you go on the sea,
For the sea will never need you.

If you ask for the reason of every command,
And argue with people about you,
Willie, my son, don't you go on the land,
For the land will do better without you.

If you stop to consider the work you have done,
And to boast what your labor is worth, dear,
Angels may come for you, Willie, my son,
But you'll never be wanted on earth, dear!

In these and many other poems, as throughout his work generally, one is struck by the great influence the Bible has had over Mr. Kipling, in common with many other great English writers, and by the striking use to which he has put his reading of it. A curious and particularly vivid instance of this is the poem "En-Dor," also in the new volume, a suggestive and rather enigmatic comment on the recent wave of spiritualism, owing to the war, and the attempts of bereaved people to communicate with their dead through the interposition of mediums. The whole rationale of a séance is very graphically hinted at—the pathos of the hope, the plausibility of the trick, the certainty of the illusion:

Whispers shall comfort us out of the dark—
Hands—ah, God, that we knew!
Visions and voices—look and hark!—
Shall prove that our tale is true,
And that those who have passed to the further
shore
May be hailed—at a price—on the road to En-Dor.

Oh, the road to En-Dor is the oldest road
And the craziest road of all!
Straight it runs to the witch's abode,
As it did in the days of Saul,
And nothing has changed of the sorrow in store
For such as go down on the road to En-Dor!

In this new volume, "The Years Between"—which, as might be expected from the seriousness of the times, represents Mr. Kipling chiefly as the poet-moralist—the poem which, by virtue of both theme and treatment, stands above the rest is, doubtless, the fine salutation to "France—1913," a noble and illuminative recognition of the essentially identical humanistic idealism of the French and Anglo-Saxon spirits—despite all the old rivalries and "battles long ago." I must find room for a few lines:

Broke to every known mischance, lifted over all
By the light, sane joy of life, the buckler of the Gaul;
Furious in luxury, merciless in toil,
Terrible with strength that draws from her tireless soil;
Strictest judge of her own worth, gentlest of man's mind,
First to follow truth and last to leave old truths behind—
France, beloved of every soul that loves its fellow-kind!

Spurred or balked at every stride by the other's
strength,
So we rode the ages down and every ocean's
length!
Where did you refrain from us or we refrain from
you?
Ask the wave that has not watched war between
us two!
Others held us for a while, but with weaker
charms;
These we quitted at the call for each other's arms.

Eager toward the known delight, equally we strove—
Each the other's mystery, terror, need, and love.
To each other's open court with our proofs we came.
Where could we find honor else, or men to test our claim?
From each other's throat we wrenched—valor's last reward—
That extorted word of praise gasped 'twixt lunge and guard.
In each other's cup we poured mingled blood and tears,
Brutal joys, unmeasured hopes, intolerable fears—
All that soiled or salted life for a thousand years.
Proved beyond the need of proof, matched in every clime,
O companion, we have lived greatly through all time!

One is particularly glad of this poem, because it definitely absolves Mr. Kipling from that limitation of British insularity, imperialism, provincialism, and so forth, with which he stands charged by many readers. The charge comes from those who have not read sufficiently below the surface—or, in fact, read Mr. Kipling very thoroughly on the surface, either. It is true that he has sung the glories of England, as it is meet and proper for an Englishman to do. And he has sung the British army, not so much as a military machine, in which he has been far from always professing pride, but because of his affection for his personal friend, that quaint, rather pathetic, and very humorous being, Mr. Thomas Atkins. It is hard, as he has said, if a fellow cannot sing of "the little things he cares about."

NO FLATTERER OF HIS COUNTRYMEN

But Mr. Kipling cares too sincerely about England, has her best good too deeply at heart, foolishly to flatter her; and on several momentous occasions he has not hesitated to call her sharply to task without fear or favor. The man who wrote "The Islanders" is no flatterer, but the wielder of a truly patriotic scourge. It dealt with the materialistic apathy into which Mr. Kipling considered England to have fallen about the time of the South African War, her thoughtless self-confidence and luxurious indifference to the men who went out to fight her battles and do her work at the ends of the earth:

Yet ye were saved by a remnant (and your land's long-suffering star)
When your strong men cheered in their millions while your striplings went to the war;
And ye sent them comfits and pictures to help them harry your foes,
And ye vaunted your fathomless power, and ye flaunted your iron pride,
Ere ye fawned on the Younger Nations for the men who could shoot and ride!
Then ye returned to your trinkets; then ye contented your souls
With the flanneled fools at the wicket or the muddied oafs at the goals.

Not much flattery of England here! Literary gall and wormwood have seldom been more bitter than that last thrust at the traditional phrase about the battle of Waterloo having been won on the playing-fields of Eton.

No, not England alone, but the Anglo-Saxon, the English stock wherever found—in America, in Canada, in Australia, in all the offshoots of England the mother—and the sense of duty, honest work, and upright living, the manliness and essential morality, the thoroughness and fair play, that that stock has mainly stood for, have been Mr. Kipling's theme.

There was a passing unfortunate moment when America took umbrage at certain observations made by Mr. Kipling on his first visit here, much as she took umbrage at Dickens years ago, ignoring the general sympathy and even enthusiasm of his commentary. But that time has happily passed, and I believe that America has come to see that Mr. Kipling is at least as much her mouthpiece as England's own, and that no living man is better fitted to interpret the one country to the other, to further that *rapprochement* of great daughter to great mother, which is merely the affirmation of a natural fact, and to impede which should be regarded as the greatest possible crime against civilization. Here is a work to do of true internationalism founded on ties of blood and spirit, as distinct from that spurious internationalism bred merely in the brains of theorists and sentimentalists, and all such ink-blooded deniers of the God of Things as They Are.

Mr. Kipling, no less than any one, realizes that the world moves, but he realizes, too, that it does so in "a mysterious way," and very slowly, and that there is no use in trying to hurry it up with bombs on the one hand, or to feed it with soothing-sirup on the other. By seeing it clearly as it is, he is the more useful in helping it toward what it is in endless process of becoming. His publishers advertise "The Remarkable Rightness of Rudyard Kipling." Here for once is a publishers' advertisement that may be accepted as one-hundred-per-cent true.

The Girl Named Rose

BY ELEANOR INGRAM

Illustrated by F. McAnelly

"THE whistles!" the blind man repeated. "Listen to the whistles, Mme. Sally! They blew like that on the day our ship came in. It seemed like an especially kind thought of New York's for those of us who could not see that we were at home; it made us realize we were there. Although I think I should have known, anyhow. The smell in the air, even the rain in one's face, felt like Manhattan. And this morning another transport is in. More lucky fellows—if they all have Mme. Sallys to come home to."

He held out his hand and his companion put hers into it. The two hands closed firmly together, palm to palm. No young woman could give a clasp like that, the man reflected; only age or oneness of sex could know that calm, steady comradeship. Only beautiful age, he quickly amended his first thought.

Together, they listened to the swelling clamor that filled the air as running water fills a cup. The droning roar seemed a solid bulk of sound pierced through here and there by the crescendo of siren whistles that soared like screams of jubilance to die down a scale of happy exhaustion.

"Not that I was so happy when I first heard the whistles," he presently said. "Ungrateful of me, of course, since I had the hope of regaining my sight in time, when so many have—nothing. But coming home to a long wait in a dreary hospital is not a very joyous business; especially to a man whose father, mother, and sister were all swept away from him in one ghastly disaster. It all came back, there on the wharf in the drizzling rain."

The comforting hand pressed closer to his—the hand that had the texture and, as he imagined, the color of satin mellowed to an ivory tint in some cedar-scented chest.

"I do—I did try not to think of morbid things," he excused himself. "But, dear Mme. Sally, will you ever understand what I felt when you came hurrying to me there on the wharf, all gaiety and daintiness, soft words and soft, caressing touches? When you made me comprehend who you were, and that you meant to carry me off to your home for these months of waiting, because my people and you had been neighbors in a sleepy little Connecticut town? You sank into me like sunshine into frozen ground. I did not believe I could ever be so happy as you've made me here."

"Yet you were very obstinate at first, Jeffery."

"Because I feared to burden you."

"Or because I am such a flighty old lady?"

"No, never!"

"No, not really; just a lonely one who wanted so much to help."

"We have had three months together since then, Mme. Sally."

"Yes, Jeffery."

He relaxed luxuriously in his long chair.

"Tell me again what this room looks like. Make me see it."

The little figure beside him rose to close the window. The welcoming clamor of city and harbor was ended now. She returned to her chair opposite to his, across the hearth, and took up her knitting.

"It is a square room," she began; "with golden-brown walls, a gleaming brown floor with some Chinese rugs, and latticed windows where gold-colored silk curtains *will* flutter against the jars of daffodils and fuss the poor flowers to a quiver. The fat chairs are brown willow with gold-colored cushions, and so is the couch. But on the table, at the opposite end from where the gold-shaded lamp stands and my orange, Persian pussy-cat is asleep at this moment—ah, there is the artistic color break! There stands a big, lovely, rose-pink bowl with a bevy of wee goldfish swimming in

the clear water and flirting their little fins in Oriental contempt for all us crude Western folk. Also, there is a gay lacquered stick such as Chinese ladies use for stirring those same goldfish into action when they loaf too long. And, of course, there is the fire, behind my bronze andirons from the old brick house in Connecticut; and the low bookcases

I remember seeing you in our home town when I was a boy. You are not very tall, yet you achieve an effect of stateliness. Your hair is white, I remember, and it is

"IF YOU REMEMBER HOW DULL HER LIFE WAS, IT IS NOT ASTONISHING THAT WATCHING HIS ACTIVITIES BECAME ROSE'S GREAT AMUSEMENT"

around the walls. Altogether, I flatter myself that it is a room that looks as if the sun were shining in it, even on cloudy days."

"The sun is shining in any room where you are, always," he replied. "And I can put you into the chair opposite me, because

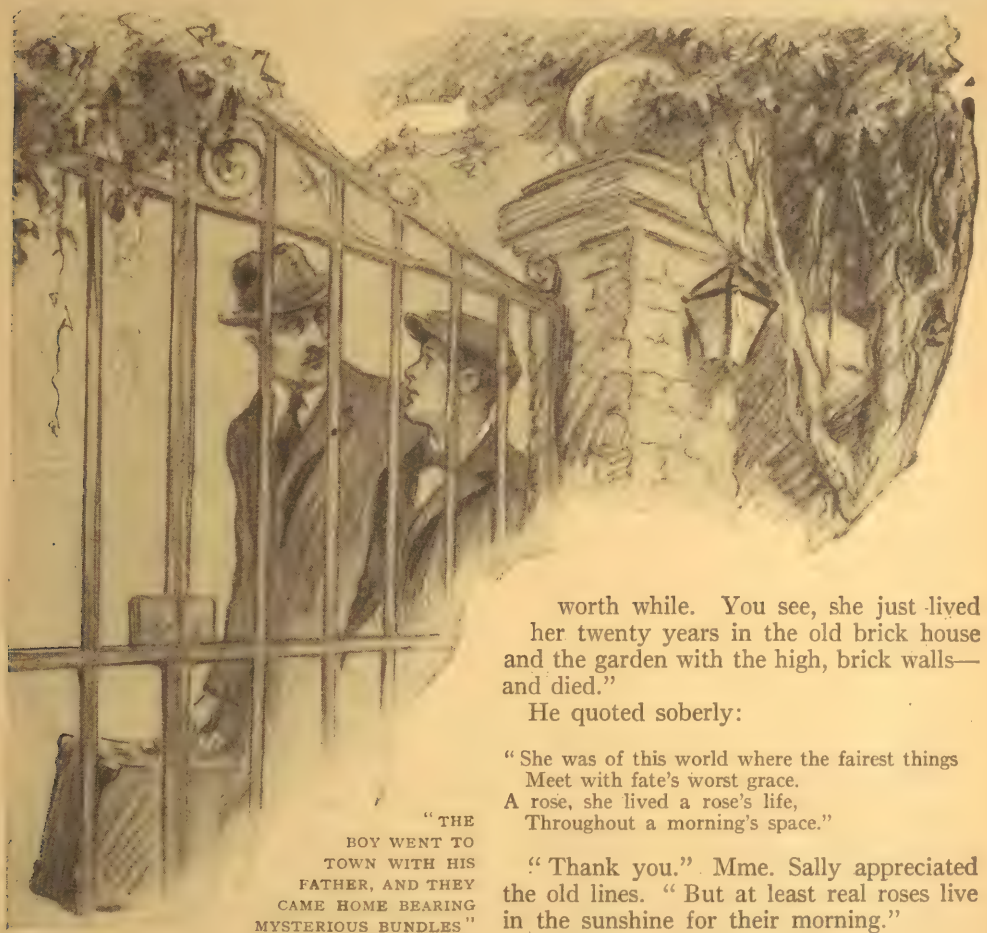
curly, because I have touched it. What color is your dress to-day?"

"A daring one for my years and dignity —pink linen, with white collar and cuffs."

"Good! To match the pink Chinese bowl! And I know you have brown eyes."

"The family record at home says I was born—"

"Never mind that. You haven't told me to-day about the pictures on our brown



"THE BOY WENT TO TOWN WITH HIS FATHER, AND THEY CAME HOME BEARING MYSTERIOUS BUNDLES"

walls. And that reminds me—you have never told me what the little oval picture is, the one on the wall beside me. I happened to brush against it this morning as I came in, so I ran my fingers over it to see what it was shaped like. I am quite sure you never described it for me, or I would not have forgotten. It must be facing you now, as you sit there."

Mme. Sally stirred in her chair and hesitated.

"Yes, it faces me," she corroborated. "It is a portrait of my grandniece, Rose, who died last year."

"I beg your pardon," he regretted. "Don't try to describe it. I did not mean to give you pain."

"It does not pain me to speak of her," she slowly denied. The whisper of the knitting-needles stopped. "Only, since you do not remember her, it has not seemed worth while. You see, she just lived her twenty years in the old brick house and the garden with the high, brick walls—and died."

He quoted soberly:

"She was of this world where the fairest things
Meet with fate's worst grace.
A rose, she lived a rose's life,
Throughout a morning's space."

"Thank you." Mme. Sally appreciated the old lines. "But at least real roses live in the sunshine for their morning."

"And your Rose did not?"

"No. At best her morning's space was a misty morning, with drops falling from trees and hedges like tears. She was spared storms, it is true; but I think she grew so very, very tired that she just stopped living. I did not understand her then; not in the least. I could do better for her now."

"I remember your house across the road from ours, and your garden closed in by a high, brick wall, all moss-grown with age," Jeffery said thoughtfully. "I remember you at its gate, once when I took you a message from my mother. Of course, I knew there was a little girl at your house, but I cannot seem to remember her. I was always so busy as a boy."

"Yes; always."

"Mme. Sally, how you say that! And you always evade telling me about your Rose in a way that makes me feel almost as if I were somehow at fault; almost as if I had known her and somehow offended her. Is it possible that I did?"

"No. You never knew her, so certainly you never offended her. I hear Dr. Martin's car stopping at our door."

"Mme. Sally, if it does not give you pain will you tell me the story of your Rose some time?" he asked bluntly.

The needles in her hands clicked together with her movement to rise, and she paused to secure them in the web of wool.

"Some time before you are quite well and go away to your man's world," she promised. "If you want me to, really."

"I have only ears to bring grist to my mind, now that my eyes are closed," he deprecated. "Consequently, they are shamelessly ravenous. But I am never going away anywhere without taking you along. You've got to adopt me."

"I thought I had."

"Forever, I mean; not just while I am blind."

She laughed at his urgency, but swept her hand lightly across his hair by way of assent as she passed him on her way to the door.

"Well—but meanwhile Dr. Martin has rung twice. I had forgotten Marina was at the market, bargaining for our food as only an old Italian woman can bargain."

II

JEFFERY HARLETH heard her go out of the room, and presently there were the distant sounds of the doctor's admittance and greeting. There was always an interval before he came in to his patient, while he "visited" with Mme. Sally. There was a cordial friendship between those two. Harleth waited, vaguely listening to the fire snapping on the hearth and making soft sounds like the rustling of fabric—the rustle of a beautiful woman's flame-silk gown, he fancied dreamily; or perhaps the waving of her plumed fan.

He was still intrigued by the image of the dead girl whose life he glimpsed behind the lattice of Mme. Sally's reserve. Somehow he felt assured that more mystery than grief went into the making of that lattice erected by Rose's great-aunt. He resolved that he would look at the portrait of Rose when the doctor took off his bandages; the first day, right after he looked at Dr. Martin, his very good friend, and Mme. Sally, best friend of all.

The doctor was in the room a moment later, firm hand grasping the invalid's, hearty voice greeting him.

After the usual routine was finished, Harleth put the question he allowed himself only at intervals:

"When can I have these bandages off, doc? When can I see?"

"Much sooner than I expected," said the doctor cheerfully. "But little by little, you know. I shall not turn you out to gambol in the sunshine all at once. Shaded places at first. You'll have to use Mme. Sally for sunbeams for a while."

"That is not very hard to do," Harleth said, his heart leaping up at the suddenness of the promised release.

"No," agreed the doctor in a low voice.

"In fact, she is a sunshine that I hope to keep all my life," Harleth confided with an outrush of frankness. "Neither of us has a relative in the world. I do not know why a man should not adopt an aunt, or an old lady adopt a nephew. If you knew the comrade she is!"

"I can guess."

"I never guessed that there could be any one like her, day in and day out. She has a grief of her own, too. She lost her grandniece recently, the last of her kin—the girl on the wall, there. I mean the miniature opposite Mme. Sally's favorite seat."

The doctor had finished his work for that day. He walked over to the wall indicated by his patient's gesture and stood before the portrait.

"Dr. Martin, will you describe that miniature for me?" Harleth asked abruptly.

"Hasn't Mme. Sally done so already?"

"No. She just said it was a portrait of her grandniece, Rose."

He could imagine Martin nodding assent. The doctor began to speak with slow and careful accuracy.

"The frame is an oval about as broad as my palm; ivory, carved with some kind of flowers that hang down over the glass here and there in an odd sort of way. The girl in it would be looking across her shoulder, with her chin sort of tilted, as if some one had just spoken to her. She has a warm complexion; not pink and white, but a kind of cream and deep rose that goes well with a lot of fuzzy brown hair heaped

up on her head and held with a high comb. Her eyebrows are the same color as her hair, her lashes, too, but her eyes are soot-black. I can't say whether you would call her beautiful or pretty. Her face has too much character for either word to fit very well, to my mind. I'll tell you what she does look like—those golden-petaled daisies with soft black centers that grow wild in the fields in July. Black-eyed Susans, children call them."

He stretched out his hand, and the doctor shook it briefly on his way to the door.

Mme. Sally did not come back at once after the doctor's departure. The old Sicilian who was Marina's husband came in

"NEITHER SHE NOR I HAVE MARRIED; BUT IS THAT ANY REASON WHY WE SHOULD NOT IF WE CHOOSE?"

Harleth nodded wonderingly.

"Thanks! I didn't know that you were such an art-lover, doc. Does she look like a girl who would die young?"

"No—yes, perhaps. Wait! She looks filled with health, but as if she possessed a flame within her that might consume it as a burning wick does oil, given occasion. I mean, if she found no safe outlet for all that fire."

"Thank you," said Harleth again.

to tend the fire. He also was Harleth's assistant nurse and valet, and he punctiliously inquired as to the patient's possible needs before withdrawing from the room.

Harleth wanted nothing—at least, nothing that old Luigi could supply. He continued to sit with his face turned toward the picture that he could not see. He was profoundly stirred by the hope of release from his bandages and darkness days in advance of his most optimistic expectation;

yet the image of the dead Rose had the power to compel his attention like a living presence in the room.

"Why?" he asked himself, since he never had heeded her existence in the days when she dwelt in the old brick house opposite his father's place.

And why had she died at the age of twenty? Why was Mme. Sally so reluctant to speak of her? Could it be that Rose's history in some way had inspired Mme. Sally's beautiful kindness to him? No, that was too far-fetched. Yet the idea persisted.

III

By and by Mme. Sally came into the room again. She took her seat across from Jeffery, and various little sounds apprized him that she had brought sewing to occupy her hour. He heard the click of scissors, the whisper of thread unwound from a spool; he even detected the sweet-grass fragrance of her work-basket, and wondered if it were lined with colored satin, like baskets he had seen in shops.

"Mme. Sally!" He spoke abruptly. "Will you not tell me the story of your grandniece Rose?"

He heard her breath catch.

"Now?" she queried.

"Please."

"But—why?"

He considered before replying.

"I don't know any reason," he honestly admitted, "except that I should like to hear it. No, that isn't quite right; it seems as if I *ought* to hear it. I vaguely remember her as a child. Perhaps that is why I feel as I do. I can't explain, but the thought of her haunts me. If I heard her history I might be able to forget her."

"N-no," dissented Mme. Sally. "You will never quite forget her history, I fear."

"It is so striking?"

"No; it is quite commonplace."

"Tell me," he insisted.

"Then I must tell it as I learned to understand her mind after she died. If her guardian had understood while she lived, all might have been different."

"Yes."

He heard the click of thimble and scissors laid down together, and visioned Mme. Sally's white-curled head drooping to her supporting hand. Probably she was gazing at the fire on the hearth, he thought.

"Rose was a lonely little girl," she declared. "Always I see her alone, now, when I look back. We were very proud and quite poor. Because Marina and Luigi had lived with us year after year, and kept the brick house and garden in order and dignity, no one guessed how poor we really were. They loved us, and they managed with so little to spend, such tiny wages. But at times even food was scanty. Never was there money for pretty frocks or fun for Rose. Probably it was her misfortune that our neighborhood had grown into a fashionable, well-to-do colony of people from the city. It takes money to mingle pleasantly with such people. So, more than ever, we stayed shut away in the brick house and met no one. Rose did not even go to school. I taught her what I could, as did her other aunt, my sister, Mme. Camilla. Also, she read tirelessly in our musty library. I know now that her head was filled with dreams. Perhaps that was why she fell in love with the first reality that came before her fancy, when she was eleven years old."

"In love at eleven?" he asked, smiling.

"Not lovers' love, of course; but is not a child's love as ardent, if different from man's or woman's? Did you yourself never love a puppy or a kitten or some special person until you just ached with ardor? Ah, I touched you there!"

"Oh, yes, that way. I had a dog—"

"Of course! What boy hasn't? But, you see, Rose had not even a pet, except Aunt Camilla's aged pair of love-birds who sat with their heads together all day. So she took into her affection a little boy whom she first saw galloping a small pony out the gates of the new house opposite her own. His parents had built the house and had just moved in. He was a very real boy indeed, riding the pony as fast as it could pelt and shouting like an Indian. Snow flew from the pony's hoofs; the boy waved a hockey-stick above his head and bore a pair of bright skates slung over his shoulder. The little girl shut in the prim brick house marveled at his aliveness, envied him. Please do not suppose that she was sentimental about him, or had precocious ideas of love and marriage. Nothing of the sort existed. She wished that she was a boy, to go with him.

"He always was doing something interesting. He rode out with his mother in a big limousine; went to town with his father, and they came home bearing mysterious

bundles. He dashed in and out on the pony, followed by a Chow dog whose tongue was purple instead of pink, like other dogs Rose had seen. He had numbers of boy friends. There were parties for his birthday and holidays, when little girls in lovely frocks came, as well as the boys. If you remember how dull her life was, it is not astonishing that watching his activities became Rose's great amusement; or that her world became somewhat blank when he went away to school. At first, he came home every week-end."

"Wait," interrupted Harleth, with an odd breathlessness. "The house was opposite your own. What was the boy's name?"

"She did not know at first, so she called him Lucky, because he had so much. Later, when she learned his real name, she kept thinking of him as Lucky. She liked it better, perhaps, or thought it part of the secret game of playing that they were friends. She called herself Tom, and imagined all the stern masculine adventures they might have had together by sea and land.

"After a time, he stayed away at school, and then at college. His family spent much time in the city, but they came back to the little town each summer, so she still saw him occasionally. Then he settled in business in the city. Meanwhile she had become a young lady, almost without any one noticing the fact. You see, Camilla died, and Rose still seemed childishly young. There was no intent to neglect her; but no change was made in her drab life. She had no more friends than as a child, went out no more, saw no one.

"Then the war caught America into its whirlpool. Like a nun shut away behind a grating, Rose saw flags go up in the windows of houses. She heard music playing, and the tread of the boys marching away. Life and death, anguish and pride, the pulse of the world beating full stroke—and none of it for her! Three old people around her, chilled of blood, indifferent, sad, gray folk."

"Not you!"

"Yes, Jeffery, then. So blind I was, so wrapped in the custom of dreary years; but Rose— One day she read in a newspaper that Lucky had gone, was in France, a marine. Because she had no flag to put up in her window, no right to wear service pin or ring for any one, she began the old game again, secretly pretending that Lucky was her man at the front. She always thought of him as magnificent and conquering. I was sitting in the living-room of the brick house one evening when she came in to me. It was dusk, and the lamp had not yet been lit, so her face and the newspaper she held were like pale blurs before me.

"'Aunt Sally,' she said in a queer, high voice, 'Lucky isn't lucky any more. He is dying over there, and blind; and I think I am, too.'

"She crumpled up in a little heap on the floor, as if she were very tired. I think she was; but the doctor said that she was sickening with influenza. It was a bad year for the young people. Our neighborhood lost many besides Rose."

"The man was—myself?" Harleth presently asked.

"Yes, Jeffery."

"How can you know all she felt, like that?"

"There was a book in her own desk. Lonely people still keep diaries, 'The Boy Who Might Have Played with Me,' she called it. She wrote down everything, even how much she wanted a new-fashioned frock instead of the kind I thought suitable."

There was a silence in the brown-and-gold room. Finally Mme. Sally added hurriedly:

"There was more in her desk. She had developed the oddest knack for writing fairy tales and illustrating them with funny, gay little sketches of her own. She never had thought of trying to sell them; but afterward I sent them to a publisher of children's books, and they sold amazingly. I have more money from them than I want. Later, when I heard how your parents were lost on that ship, trying to go to you; and how you were being sent home alone, it came to me that I might take old Luigi and Marina and make you welcome here. Perhaps I could not bear the empty brick house any longer; or perhaps I wanted to see a bit of the world myself. At any rate, I came."

"God bless you for it!" he said.

"I think He has," returned Mme. Sally cheerfully.

IV

But she went out of the room after a few minutes, with some vague excuse about looking over Marina's purchases at the market. Which was absurd, for Marina

would have tolerated no such interference with her incomparable management.

Again Jeffery Harleth was left sitting alone, his bandaged eyes turned toward the little portrait on the wall; only this time he knew the story of the girl depicted there.

Some one, then, had thought about him! The idea abashed him unreasonably. What if he had known? Would he have lived differently, he wondered? He reviewed all those years — heedless, happy, crowded years, until the last two. At least, if he had known, he would have coaxed her out to play with him, perhaps to ride the yellow pony. Later, he might have called upon her, taken her motoring or even to the theater. His mother would have helped.

Perhaps, if she had known him really, all the glamour would have been brushed away. She might have ceased caring about the "boy who might have played with me." What, then, if he had learned to love her uselessly and to his grief?

What if they had come to love as man and woman? If she had had the right to wear his service pin? If he had come home to her, and she was here with him and Mme. Sally, and Rose meant youth, fragrance, warmth at the heart and lips?

Dreams! He and Mme. Sally were clasping lonely hands across darkness and age, with the sad wreckage of broken hopes all about them both.

He was aroused by the shovel rattling in the hod, and old Luigi's heavy breathing as he stooped over the hearth.

"Luigi!" Harleth welcomed his attendant. "Will you unhook the little portrait hanging on the wall there, and give it to me? I want it in my hands."

The shovel fell into the hod as it escaped the rheumatism-gnarled fingers.

"The—what, *signore?*" quavered Luigi.

"The picture, Luigi—the oval picture in the carved-ivory frame just over there." He pointed with careful memory. "The picture, I mean, of Miss Rose."

"You see that, *signore?*" the old man faltered.

"No, of course not. Mme. Sally told me it was there. I want it, to feel."

After a brief hesitation, Luigi shuffled across the floor and obeyed the request. Harleth's sharpened hearing advised him of the clink of a ring released from a hook, the servant's shuffling return to his side, and subsequent exit. He was left alone with the miniature in his grasp.

Reverently he passed his fingers over the glass, imagining the color and line behind that cold barrier. Holding the portrait, he deliberately recalled the doctor's description, word by word. Gradually there rose before him an image, rounded and vivid—soft eyes, like the dusky hearts of flowers glanced into his darkness; curls like thick, bright petals framed a girl's face. Yes, there came a fragrance with the vision—a cool, pure sweetness like the breath of fields in summer evenings when the black-eyed Susans were in bloom amid the rich grass.

When he was a boy — ah, incredible human stupidity in growing up!

He met Mme. Sally again at dinner. They did not allude to the girl named Rose. They were very merry on the subject of the first play Harleth would choose to see after his approaching release from his bandage.

The days quietly followed on through the next week or two without any return to the subject of the past; but Jeffery Harleth brooded much over the new image introduced into the dark little world in which he dwelt. There are men to whom the knowledge that they are loved makes an almost irresistible appeal. Others must walk all the steps to the goal, and are disgusted in advance with a love that comes to meet them. But the love of a girl who has passed out of reach is tantalizing; and the hidden affection of a girl child who is dead is as pitiful as a bird's cry by night.

Not that Harleth fancied Rose had loved him. He understood her childish hunger for a comrade; but he thought of what comradeship might have become, since neither of them had loved any one else. If she had been as perfect a chum as her Aunt Sally!

One day he abruptly spoke something of these thoughts to Mme. Sally.

"You were right about my never being able to forget the story you told me," he concluded. "Whenever I think of home, I must think of your niece, Rose; just as when I think suddenly of you, I always hear the whistles of New York harbor making a din of welcome where there was no welcome for me until your cordial hands gripped mine. We are never going to part, are we, Mme. Sally? We two waifs are bound together. I want to begin taking care of you, next."

"'Thine own wish, wish I to thee in

THE DOOR OF THE ROOM OPENED WITH UNHURRIED QUIETNESS, AND A YOUNG GIRL HE HAD NEVER SEEN STOOD ON THE THRESHOLD

every place,'" she quoted sweetly to him. "And it is time for our tea! Did you sniff the *pan forte da Siena* that Marina has made for us?"

But she did not promise. It came to him later, with a vague qualm of unease, that she never had assented openly and frankly to the many plans he had spun for their united future. Neither had she ever refused or denied his wish. Was it then a mere chance of speech, or did she purposely evade answering him?

V

On the occasion of Dr. Martin's next visit, Harleth spoke to him of this perplexity. The professional part of the call was ended, and the doctor was packing his bag while Harleth set forth his desire and his doubt.

"I want her to be as much my kin as if she really were my aunt," he finished anxiously. "Why not? Townsfolk who know all about each other are sort of related, anyhow. There would be some one for me to come home to, when I get back in harness; some one for her to watch for. Won't you speak to her, doc, of how ideal that would be?"

"No," the doctor declined bruskly, "I won't."

"Why not?" stammered the astonished Harleth.

The bag snapped shut with a click.

"You selfish young brute!" said Martin queerly. "Did it ever occur to your conceit that some one else might want Mme. Sally? *I* want her, for instance. And if she can put up with me, I mean to have her."

Stupefied, Harleth sat up, turning his bandaged eyes toward the other man.

"I—I beg your pardon," he managed an apology. "Somehow, I had fancied you a younger man. Stupid of me."

"As for age, I do not call myself decrepit yet, and I am seven years older than she is," came the retort. "Neither she nor I have married; but is that any reason why we should not if we choose?"

"Of course! I mean, forgive me," essayed the amazed Harleth. "That is, I wish you luck."

"Oh, she hasn't taken me yet," the doctor dryly checked him, and took his departure hurriedly.

With a stricken sense of abandonment, Harleth faced toward the miniature on the wall. There was the companionship that should have been his—the flower-brightness of youth in the clasp of youth!

It was all as it should be, of course; yet Harleth could scarcely have been more wretchedly jealous and dejected at losing Rose than at losing Mme. Sally. Life in prospect seemed a blank thing, hardly worth the trouble of resuming at so much effort.

But two days later Dr. Martin spoke briefly to his patient on taking his leave.

"She won't have me," he announced.

He said no more than that, and clattered the door shut after him.

Harleth was ashamed of his relief.

A slight constraint that had sprung up between him and Mme. Sally during those two days quite melted away in the sunshine of his renewed content. Their comradeship seemed more exquisite than ever, after the peril passed. In these, the last days of his sightlessness, the atmosphere of the brown bungalow sparkled pure and rarefied as the air of a mountaintop. It was a height of achievement on which he and Mme. Sally stood, before the inevitable descent into the ordinary levels of life. Even Luigi and Marina felt the excitement and strain, and the orange Persian aristocrat among cats took to sleeping on Harleth's knee, as if detecting in him the center of general interest.

The day drew near when Harleth was to be allowed to see. Already there had been experiments, all successful. The tension drew more taut among them all, even Dr. Martin succumbing at last. Indeed, his irritability with his patient almost came to be rudeness.

"Do you mean all the things you have said about Mme. Sally's being everything to you, Harleth?" he roughly demanded.

"Of course I mean it," Harleth answered, startled.

Martin walked across the floor and back, slapping his gloves across his open palm.

"I'll tell you something, Harleth," he volunteered ungraciously, "not because I want to. I suppose I have been brought up to some standards I can't escape. You were in the service, too—fought for the country, and all that. Well, you are expected to have your bandages taken off on Thursday."

"Yes."

"Mme. Sally is going away on Wednesday night—going secretly, so as not to worry you until it is over. She doesn't take your offer, old man, any more than she would take mine."

So that was it! Through all his shock of bitter disappointment, Harleth recognized the explanation of much that had puzzled him in these past days. Her gentleness had been that of one who knew that the end of their intimacy was nearing; her perfect companionship had the savor of all things about to end and be no more. It was with a sense of groping that he finally asked:

"Why?"

"I shall not tell you. I have betrayed her already. Whatever you do, see that you keep my confidence about that."

"What can I do if she doesn't want to stay?"

The doctor's gloves slapped across his palm half a dozen times before he answered.

"I'll take off your bandage Wednesday noon," he said.

Wednesday was the following day.

That was a long, strange evening that Harleth spent opposite the unconscious Mme. Sally. Was she altogether unconscious, though? He fancied a sadness beneath her airiest gaiety now that he knew the truth. When she read to him, the tender cadences of her voice had a poignancy not drawn from the story.

Yet, if she regretted, why go? Pride, perhaps; or perhaps she had used up all the money from Rose's fairy-tale book and refused to let him take care of her as he desired. He had promised Martin that he would not speak, but it was very hard to keep his word.

He was glad when the evening ended. Yet, after old Luigi had left him for the night, he found himself unable to sleep, and tossed through hours more unbearable than the earlier time had been.

VI

Morning at last! Then the ordeal of casual greetings and breakfast. Unless something went wrong, it was Harleth's last meal with closed eyes.

More hours to be got through before Martin was due.

It was past noon when all was finally over, and the doctor, triumphant yet tired and subdued, was taking his departure.

"Keep the room shaded like this," he ordered by way of farewell. "Use your common sense and caution. I'll be back this afternoon. Luck to you!"

Left alone, Harleth sat in a renewal of sight like a miracle of rapture. For a while, it was enough; he had no thought of any one or anything else; but presently vision itself recalled him.

The shutters were closed and the silk curtains drawn, but still the room swam in a warm, mellow haze infinitely pleasant. All looked just as Mme. Sally had painted it for him, just as he had conceived it to be. In the rose-colored bowl the bright-scaled little fish circled placidly or poised in the clear water. His friend, the cat, yawned among the cushions of the window-seat. He thought it the loveliest room in the world.

Then he remembered a promise made to himself many times. Deliberately he turned toward the miniature of the girl named Rose who had died.

There was no portrait on the wall. Where it should have been, some one had hung a small mirror. An oval mirror it was, in a carved-ivory frame.

After a moment, Harleth slowly stepped across and passed his fingers over the mirror, closing his eyes. He knew the thing with every intimacy of recognition. It was what he had held in his hands, what he had poured dreams upon, what Martin had described to him. Only, under that glass surface should have lain the pictured face of a girl who resembled a golden gentian.

A mirror! His heart began to beat quickened strokes of confused excitement. He did not know why, or what doubt and expectancy woke with the pulse. Why had Martin lied to him about the picture, and old Luigi also? Why—

The door of the room opened with that unhurried quietness so characteristic of Mme. Sally's movements. Harleth turned.

A young girl he had never seen stood on the threshold. She wore a short skirt of white serge and a white middy blouse, against which her flowing silk scarf made a splash of brilliant golden yellow. She wore absurd little white shoes, laced high, but not high enough to conceal a silken flash of yellow to match the scarf. A frivolous, small figure in Mme. Sally's doorway, surely!

Her hair was like thick, bright petals folded about her cream-pale little face, but her eyes were soot-dark. In her hands she held Mme. Sally's sewing-basket. He recognized the tinkle of its dainty tools and the adornment of silk and cretonne fruit he often had idly fingered while they chatted.

The girl did not observe his unbandaged eyes, fresh as she was from the outdoor light. She spoke quite calmly to him, while he stared transfixed.

"Such a good day! I never saw the river such a lovely blue. And only one day for you to wait before you see it, too!"

The voice was Mme. Sally's, serene yet elastic with life; dear to him in every warm cadence. Harleth never knew how he arrived at the right name, by what leaping instinct he cried it aloud.

"Rose!" he cried. "Rose! Rose!"

The basket escaped her grasp, and all its varied contents rolled merrily, clinking over the floor between them. Her startled, dark eyes flashed to meet the open ardor and marvel of his. Then, her hands covering her face, she fled back toward the door. Harleth won that race by just a stride.

"Mme. Sally!" he gasped in his utter bewilderment.

She answered between concealing fingers:

"I am—Mme. Sally. Let me go."

"Rose!"

"I am Rose. I was going away—I meant to be gone before you found out. Let me pass!"

Harleth pressed his shoulders more firmly against the door behind him. His brain was beginning to clear now. He understood Dr. Martin, old Luigi, even himself.

"Why?" he questioned unsteadily. "Don't we know each other better than most people ever do? Why, Mme. Sally, do you think I can ever forget your hand in the dark?"

"Let me go now. I—I will see you again before I leave. I promise! I will explain."

"But it is your house," he reminded her. "If some one must leave, I will. Only, why the haste? Don't you trust me except when I am blind?"

"Oh!"

He waited a long moment, while his new-born sight drank in her beauty and his heart steadied to a profound exultation. Then she turned away from him and walked across to Mme. Sally's chair beside the hearth. Still, with face averted, she sat down, clasping her hands on either arm of the chair, and spoiled all the dignity of the effect by crossing her ankles like a school-girl. Harleth cautiously ventured to follow and take his own chair opposite.

"You will not tell me"—he broke the silence with delicate care of each word—"that you who have been Mme. Sally believe me either so conceited or so dull as to misunderstand that childish friendship the little girl Rose gave the boy Lucky? Or the beautiful compassion that the present Rose showed to the blind, lonely man who had been her neighbor at home?"

"Everything I told you was true," she challenged, still turning her face away from him; "except that it was really poor Aunt Sally who died with the influenza."

"Yes, I know."

"I came here, then, to live near New York, where the fairy-books I write are published. I brought Luigi and Marina with me because I love them, and neither of us have any one else. I wanted to live, not suffocate in the brick house. And I have! I make stories and pictures, and buy things I always wanted and never had."

"Yes."

"Until I read in the newspaper about your coming home. Then I couldn't bear to think of a boy from home, suffering alone—"

He leaned forward and gently took the little hand nearest him.

"The boy who might have played with you, and did not, and had no claim in the world to your goodness!"

"So I brought you here," she hurried on. "And even Dr. Martin helped when I told him. I do not know any one else here; and I planned to go away to-night, so that you would never know."

"Would you have left me so empty a husk, Rose, as life without you?"

"Hush!" she flamed, suddenly turning her shamed, hot-cheeked face to him in a flare of anger. "You shall not speak to me so! Never! Do you hear? I will not have gratitude and chivalry force you to pretty speeches, still less to pretend—love!"

"Why, no," said Harleth, his clasp firm on the small hand he held. "The little Rose never loved Lucky, I know; and how could the boy love a girl he never knew? Let the children go. But the man Jeffery Harleth and the woman he has known so closely in his blindness—he loves that comrade with every fiber that is in him. Oh, little Mme. Sally, you have seen all there is of me, depth or shallowness, good or bad! Perhaps you have seen too much, and must bid me go as you did poor Martin. If so, I shall not be surprised. But if it is not so, give me a chance. I tell you honestly, I would spend all my life to teach you, Rose, what Sally has taught me so well!"

The hand trembled under his.

"Or," said Harleth, "shall I go?"

Slowly the dark eyes came up to his.

"Perhaps you had better stay," breathed Mme. Sally across the young lips. "It—might not take—quite so long."

IN FANCY'S REALM

THOSE characters whose brave deeds I relate—
Existence must for them seem bright and fair.
No tax need they to pay on real estate,
Who live within my castles in the air!

Allene Gates

The Farewell of Ah Ken

BY J. H. C. GAINFORT

Illustrated by F. W. Small

AH KEN was hustled off the liner, a lone ripple in the current of saffron faces that passed over the narrow boards to the dock. These other men of his own land meant little to him. They were just coolies.

So, when he stepped on the shores of America, he turned his eyes toward the white people, for there lay the road to success. And among the white people he got his start in the new life of the new world. Ah Ken became cook to a household of four bachelors. He was a good cook, too, having learned the art in his father's house; and what the man of the East learns, he knows very well indeed. The four bachelors thought highly of their servant.

" But," said one of them, " Ah Ken is a heathen name. We will call you O'Connor."

So Ah Ken became O'Connor, which is a good name and an honored one. In those days the young Chinaman did not know this, but he did know that his white masters were men of substance and standing; hence what they said was to be respected. Moreover, he was mastering his dislike of change.

Much learning came to him in those days. He began to understand the strange-sounding language that the four bachelors spoke. Also, he learned much of life from the same source.

It came about, however, that the bachelors separated. They changed their habits, as is the custom of white people. Two married; one went on a journey; another went to live in a great hotel; and thus the duties of O'Connor ended.

But he soon found another place, for his cooking was truly an art. This time he cooked for the mistress of a fine house. There were many servants in it, and O'Connor was a man of position among them.

One of the servants was a Portuguese maid named Lola. O'Connor observed Lola the first day he saw her. Few things escaped his thin eyes, and those few were not of much moment. Lola was decidedly a person to be noticed; but her brown eyes held disdain for the yellow-skinned cook.

The lessons of the four bachelors had not been wasted. Besides, the twenty-odd years of O'Connor's life had taught him something of the ways of men and women. One day he beckoned Lola to his side and handed her a small book. On the outside there were gold letters that spelled the name of a bank; and within were inky figures denoting a sum of money large enough to open Lola's brown eyes wider than ever.

" It is enough," said O'Connor, with the air of a man who knows.

Lola's disdain for the yellow skin vanished, and her red lips parted in a smile.

And so O'Connor, who had been Ah Ken, acquired a Portuguese bride. They left the house of the mistress of many servants. With some of the money from the little book of the gold letters they bought land.

O'Connor was fairly started on the main road now. He had found his true position. Back in his own China people dwelt on the land, and it yielded them life and the good things that man needs. He himself had worked on his father's land in the moist, warm valley of a great river. And these slopes of the Western mountains of America were fertile and green. They returned full measure for the work of O'Connor and his Lola.

Be it said that, having cast in her lot with the yellow man, this Portuguese girl gave no sign of regret; nor had she cause. She worked with him, and he on his part provided her with all that she ever had need of.

As time went on there blossomed from this union of East and West three flowers —daughters of nut-brown skin and soft eyes with just enough slant to give a spice of coquetry to their softness. O'Connor was

proud of his girls, and he worked harder than ever.

The farm on the slopes above the ocean grew and prospered. O'Connor bought other land from his less successful neighbors, and increased its yield to the standard he had set for his own. He became one of the largest landowners in the State, and acquired much wealth.

Ah Ken had become O'Connor; and now there was prefixed the honorable title of "Mister." It was said of him that he was a just man who dealt fairly with his neighbors. He did not spend his money freely, but he never failed to use it when necessity required. And none who sought his help in time of trouble was refused.

Mrs. O'Connor's needs were amply provided for, although she knew in her heart that her yellow husband thought first of his land; but with his three daughters he was more disposed to be generous. They were taught music—not the wailing music of Ah Ken's people, but the clear, bell-like music of Mr. O'Connor's country. Painting, too, they learned, and all the accomplishments of leisure. Clothes were provided, not in profusion, but in quantities to satisfy their demands—which, after all, may be called profusion.

Two of the three daughters became the wives of Americans. A naval officer carried one off to the Philippines. A rich business man married the other, and surrounded her with luxuries, the existence of which her slant-eyed father had never dreamed in the days when he was Ah Ken. But the most beautiful daughter remained single. One day O'Connor called her to him.

"Why?" he asked.

She understood.

O'CONNOR WAS STARTED ON THE MAIN ROAD NOW. BACK IN HIS OWN CHINA PEOPLE DWELT ON THE LAND, AND IT YIELDED THEM LIFE AND THE GOOD THINGS THAT MAN NEEDS

"I would marry," she said, "but he has no money, and fears to take me because you are rich."

So O'Connor sent for the boy, and found him to be a fair-skinned American who had passed through a college that unfitted him for the struggle of life.

"If you will work on my farm I will pay you," O'Connor told him. "And when you have saved enough you may marry my daughter."

The college had not interfered with the boy's pluck; and, besides, the third dark flower of the two hemispheres was very beautiful. So he went to work and saved.

A year went by,

and still the boy was working and saving. O'Connor never mentioned their bargain. Then the boy came to him.

"I have waited for you to speak," said O'Connor. "A year is much time in this country of fast life, and you have worked well. I will give you land, and you can marry and dwell upon it."

So was married the third of the daughters of O'Connor, who was Ah Ken, and of Lola. And the parents were alone again.

Always O'Connor had taken his meals with Lola and the girls. This was as important to his mind as the careful providing for their needs. Whenever there was a matter of consequence to be settled, it was discussed at the table. From the beginning Lola's wishes had been considered; and since the three beautiful daughters were grown up they, too, had had their part in the guiding of the affairs of the O'Connors.

When O'Connor took his accustomed seat at the table that night his manner was as it had always been. His yellow skin had crinkled into many lines, and his shoulders were not quite as straight as they were on the day when he showed Lola his bank-book for the first time. She had never seen it since; and it was with a little gasp of surprise that she watched him take a yellow-covered book from his pocket and thrust it toward her. It was different from the other book, and larger.

Then O'Connor spoke.

"I have counted my money and sold my land," he said. "I find that I have three millions of dollars; so I have taken one million and a half, and I am giving you one million and a half. To-night I return to China, where my wife and my sons await me. They have been patient. I must go!"

The Telltale

BY JACK BECHDOLT

Illustrated by Arthur D. Fuller

TWO men may travel as equals, but almost invariably, when three go into the woods, one of the three takes the lead.

It was not simply because he carried the compass that Jared Flint led his neighbors, Pierce and Holt, over the old trail that they had followed since noon. It was not solely due to Flint's position in the small settlement as its richest landowner; nor was it that Flint had asked these men to make the journey in order to appraise a distant timber claim about which he was disputing with the mill company. Like the sea, the forest resolves men into their elementary virtues, and an innate quality of leadership made Flint captain of the trio. Compact and rugged, he looked the part and played it.

First always, Flint mounted the trunk of a windfall and commanded a brief view of the mist-driven space before them.

"There she is, boys—Joy's old place," he announced.

There was no hint of triumph in his tone, but the relieved profanity of Pierce and the joyous shout from Holt testified to their feelings. Striking across the divide had been Flint's plan, suggested because it would save them twelve hours of hard travel. The country was new to the other two; they frankly confessed themselves lost in it. Following the difficult trail through the long, dreary, gray day, soaked to the skin by the dripping of that eternally storm-swept region of black forests and precipitous ledges, they had secretly lost heart and lost faith in their leader.

Pierce scrambled up beside Flint, his cheery red face glistening with wet, his sodden Mackinaw steaming.

"So that's Joy's place!" he echoed. "Can't be much of a place by this time, but it's welcome if it has a roof. You said there was a roof, Flint?"

"Don't know," grunted Flint. "I never was within more than a couple of miles of it, but any—"

"I said there was a roof," Holt corrected, joining his companions. "I was here a year ago, on my way to my son-in-law's claim across the divide. It had a roof then—fair enough shelter."

"It 'll be dark soon," announced Flint, and plunged forward through brush and thorns more than head-high, a vast entanglement of jungle that held water like a sponge. The other men followed without question.

There was scarcely light enough left, when they had fought through the brush of what had once been a clearing, to see the cabin. It appeared substantial, however, and the roof was standing.

The house had been built of logs with the bark left on. It had a window and a door, gaping black holes now, and a chimney at one end built of mud and sticks and partially fallen in.

There was no sound there except their own heavy breathing and the drip of the forest. The shell of what had once been a human habitation, their goal during the long day, seemed more repulsive, now they had found it, than the honest discomforts of the foot-hills.

Holt, tall, sallow, and melancholy of countenance, shuddered.

"Ugh!" he growled. "Give me a tree to lie under, any day, rather than this—when you think of what happened here."

"What do we care?" scoffed Pierce.

"Lend me your flash-light, Holt," said Flint, unperturbed. "Let's have a look inside."

With Holt's electric torch Flint led the way.

The flittering disk of light disclosed a floor paved with split cedar logs, still solid; a table that occupied the center of the

cabin; a bench, home-made, like the table; and, against the wall, close by the remains of the old hearth, two bunks, built one above the other.

It was Pierce who laid his hand on the table and swore with startled emphasis. The flash-light revealed a growth of green fungus carpeting the table-top, half an inch thick, and nasty to the touch. Everything in Joy's cabin was covered with it.

"Get a fire ready," directed Flint. "I'll clean out that chimney."

For an hour they were very busy. A small lantern from their pack succeeded the torch. The fire on the hearth, so long cold, smoked a great deal, but it added life and color to the abandoned cabin. Frying bacon and boiling coffee gradually supplanted the damp fungus smell within those walls.

Outside, darkness was absolute, and now one of the eternal procession of clouds, warm from the Japan current, was sweeping the mountains, rattling big drops against the cedar-shake roof.

They sat close by the fire with their tin plates and cups. Flint was first to light his pipe. He stared serenely about the bare and moldy walls. Holt's restless eye followed his gaze, and the last of his bacon remained uneaten.

"See anything?" demanded Pierce, with a short laugh.

"This place—gives me the—creeps," Holt complained. "I've been past here half a dozen times, I suppose, since—since Joy was here—and I never felt like stopping yet."

A suggestion of a contemptuous smile curled Flint's lip. Pierce, who took his cue from Flint, shrugged his shoulders with elaborate unconcern.

"A roof's a roof," he grunted. "Don't matter to me where the last tenant went."

"Holt, you used to know Joy, I think?" Flint interrupted.

"Saw him once in a while, when he came out for grub," Holt admitted.

"What sort of man was he?" Pierce interrogated. "He was before my time."

"Why, I don't know—ordinary sort." Holt frowned with the effort of recollection. "Scotch-Irish, I guess, black-haired, wore whiskers. Had an idea there was mineral here—gold."

"Was there?" Pierce showed interest.

"He never found it, if there was—nothing but iron. There's iron all over these hills—and magnetite—nothing worth going after; but he was always hoping, like most of the old-timers."

"Well fixed?" prompted Pierce.

"Money, you mean? Why, no, I guess not. Nobody ever knew it, anyhow."

"Well, what was he murdered for?"

"Didn't know he was murdered," Flint contributed.

"That's right, nobody knows," Holt agreed, with a shiver. "Just disappeared, thats' all. Nobody ever found hide or hair of him, nor any evidence of violence. He just vanished, and the place has stayed empty."

"Stayed empty," Flint agreed. "No mystery about it, except the kind ignorant fools like to make up. Probably Joy got sick of looking and went on; those old-timers are always doing that. Finally some relative back in Ohio put in a bid for the land; court said Joy was legally dead—and there you are. Just because the place stayed empty, every liar in the county has a theory."

Pierce laughed boisterously and raised his coffee-cup.

"Here's looking at you, Joy!" he toasted the silent walls.

"Back a little piece, against the hillside, there's a little prospect hole Joy made," Holt went on presently, "and a lot of rock he took out. You can see it to-morrow morning."

"That's so," Flint agreed. "Saw it myself one time."

Pierce thrust his sock-clad feet closer to the flame and yawned elaborately.

"Me for blankets," he said. "We've got a hard hike ahead of us to-morrow, and I promised my wife I'd be back to the ranch for supper."

II

They had cleared the old bunks of rubbish and found a few dry fir-boughs with which to line them. Holt elected to sleep on the floor, leaving the bunks to Flint and Pierce. Flint climbed to the upper one after methodically placing his wet high boots by the fire, but not too close. Pierce produced a pocket flask, offered a drink around, was refused, and helped himself to a generous nip. Then he kicked off his shoes and rolled in his blanket. Holt remained, staring moodily into the fire, which was already losing its fight against wet, green wood.

"What's the matter, Holt? Afraid of

SNATCHING THE COMPASS THONG FROM AROUND HIS NECK, HE RAISED HIS ARM AS IF TO HURL IT FROM HIM

ghosts of the murdered dead?" Pierce mocked.

"Who says he was murdered—or even that he's dead?" yawned Flint, his voice half smothered by blanket.

Holt shook his head uneasily.

"Some day we'll know. If we live long enough, it 'll all come out."

"Rot!" snorted Pierce, always ready to argue. "That's old stuff, that murder-will-out theory. Why, I've known cases—"

"There is a just God," mourned Holt. He had a turn for religious melancholy. "He moves slowly, secretly, like a glacier; but He does justice."

"Well, I won't argue religion with anybody," Pierce protested sulkily; "but I've known cases, hundreds of cases you might say—"

A snore from above, where Flint lay, interrupted. Both laughed.

"Good night," said Pierce, and buried his head under his blanket.

With slow reluctance, as if he feared to move in that lonely place, Holt took off his boots and coat and spread his bed on the hard boards. For a weary time he tossed from side to side, and when finally he fell asleep he started often and murmured audibly.

Suddenly he sat upright, wide awake.

Of the fire there remained but a dim glow from under the logs. Gradually he made out the form of Pierce huddled under his blanket and breathing evenly. The gloom above was too dense for him to know if Flint lay there, but his eyes turned to the old hearth. One pair of boots was missing.

Holt rubbed his eyes sharply and looked again. There were but four boots, his own and Pierce's. He fumbled about in the coat that had been his pillow, found the electric torch, and flashed it on Flint's bunk. The blankets were empty.

Holt cast off his own blanket and rose. He flashed the torch about the little cabin, and saw nothing except rotting wood and luxuriant green mold. He peered out of the door, but the torch revealed only the glisten of drizzling rain.

Impatiently he sat on the hearth and drew on his boots, not stopping to lace them. Coatless, he stepped into the night.

All about that cabin, the advance-guard of the forest had set up its barbed-wire entanglement of thorn and leaf, except in one dim path, well worn, that still held some semblance of shape. Holt knew that little path well; it was the track traveled by the vanished man, Elmer Joy, in his regular trips to the old prospect hole in the ledge, not seventy-five feet away.

He pushed slowly along this path, his heart hammering at his throat, the little torch winking.

Close against the overhanging gloom of the mountainside the flicker of his light picked out a moving gray shape, the gray-flannel shirt of Flint.

Flint was stooped, his head and shoulder thrust into the old prospect hole, his hand groping. At the first touch of light on the rocks about him the groping hand flew to his breast, and he wheeled slowly until he faced Holt.

"Flint, what—say, what in—"

The words died in Holt's throat. He saw, by the bright circle from his torch, that Flint's eyes were closed. His hands, clasped against the open collar of his shirt, dropped slowly.

"Flint! *Flint!*"

Holt's voice rose sharply and broke into a fearful quaver. Flint's eyelids fluttered and opened. He stared dumbly at the light for a second, started, and exclaimed:

"Hello, hello—yes!"

An explanation of Flint's conduct brought infinite relief to Holt. He became voluble.

"God!" he cried. "You—why, Flint, you been walking in your sleep!"

"Why, yes—that's so," Flint blinked. "It's you, eh, Holt? Where—what the deuce? Have I gone far?"

"Far enough, on a night like this! Come on back to your bunk, you crazy fool!"

"Where—where'd I go? What is this place?" puzzled Flint, staring about him.

"The prospect hole—Joy's old working. Remember I was telling you?"

Flint shook his head, mystified.

"Darned funny!" he muttered. "Yes, I remember—was wondering about it, in fact, when I dozed off. Sort of mental suggestion, I guess—eh, Holt?"

They walked together back to the cabin, discussing the adventure. Pierce was still asleep.

"Well," Holt exclaimed, with a short laugh, "you certainly beat any sleep-walker I ever heard about. Had sense enough to put on your boots before you started."

"Huh!" muttered Flint, staring at his feet. "Why, so I did! Always was a streak of common sense in our family—

huh! Well, g' night, Holt, and—much obliged."

Flint crawled back to his bed.

III

"DID you know I'd taken to walking in my sleep?" said Flint to Pierce.

They were cooking the breakfast bacon. Pierce's eyes widened as the other men told the story of the previous night.

"What beats me," said Flint, "is how Holt found me so quick. Knew right how to put his hands on me."

Holt looked momentarily surprised.

"Never thought about it," he admitted; "except it was pure luck. Besides, there's only one trail here that a man could move along with his eyes shut."

"That's so," his companions agreed.

They began packing their blanket-rolls. All were in better spirits; even Flint's quiet manner showed relief at the prospect of leaving.

"Now," said Flint, when they were ready, "we can take the old trail—Joy's trail—and get home about six, or we can keep on across the hills by compass and make it about three thirty or four. What d'you think?"

"Well, I promised the missis—" Pierce began.

"Suits me," nodded Holt. "Sooner I get home the better. I'd give ten dollars, right now, to put on some dry pants and a clean shirt."

"All right, then." Flint consulted the pocket compass that he wore suspended about his neck by a leather strap. "This way," he directed. "I know the general lay of the hills to the west, and we'll keep to the ridges for open timber and easy going."

Gray skies hedged in the hills so closely that they could see but a short way. The loose-knit clouds dragged their skirts over the forest-clad slopes and left long ravelings of their fleece clinging to the tree-tops. Mist alternated with rain, and the soaking underbrush of every ravine slapped at the men until their clothes hung in sodden folds and the chill entered their very bones.

There was no visible life, either feather or pelt, in the sodden woods, only the everlasting monotony of Douglas fir and the drip of water.

Flint took the lead; Holt and Pierce followed in silence, saving their breath for tramping. Their high spirits were gone. Toward noon they ate their last slices of bread and some cold bacon.

About four o'clock Flint showed the first sign of perplexity.

"Funny the hills don't drop off here," he said. "I don't make this out, boys."

"We're all right," cried Pierce, puffing and steaming. "Can't go wrong with a compass—unless you been walking in your sleep again."

"No fear," said Flint shortly.

"It's getting on," Holt muttered uneasily. "I don't want to miss my supper."

"Yes, and I promised my wife," Pierce cut in. "But I ain't worrying any with Flint breaking trail. You don't see no gray hairs in my head, do you, Holt?"

"It makes dark by five," Flint pondered slowly. "I hope we—well, come on, boys."

It was Pierce who first saw an opening in the forest—a promise of either a precipitous hillside that would give them an outlook, or of a clearing. With a shout he passed Flint, and they saw him mount a ledge of rock. His hail echoed among the trees.

"Clearing, boys! Come on, looks like we had—"

Pushing forward through a thicket of thorns, fighting warily, his arms crooked about his head for protection, Flint stopped, halted in his tracks by the peculiar break in Pierce's words.

"What 'd he say?" he complained querulously. "What's that he said, Holt?"

"Missed it," grunted Holt. "Hey, Pierce, where'd you say we are?"

Pierce made no answer. When they had cleared the thicket, they looked up to see Pierce stooping forward, staring into the cleared space ahead. Something about the fixity of his pose alarmed them both.

"Pierce!" Flint shouted. "Where the devil are we? Lost your voice?"

Pierce turned stiffly.

"You are sure *some* guide, Flint!" he exclaimed.

"What d'you mean?" growled Flint.

He and Holt arrived simultaneously at the top of the ledge and stared ahead.

"My God!" whispered Holt.

Flint's face had gone pasty-gray. His right hand fumbled for the compass hung about his neck. He stared at the quivering needle, trying with both unsteady hands to level the little telltale against his breast. His breath bubbled in his throat.

"Damn the thing! It's gone clean crazy!" he shouted.

Snatching the compass thong from around his neck, he raised his arm as if to hurl it from him.

"Here, look out, you fool!" Holt snatched at the raised arm. "We got to have that."

Flint placed the compass in his pocket without a word. Pierce burst into noisy laughter.

"Some guide!" he croaked. "Bringing us back again to—to Joy's place!"

IV

The trio stared dumbly into that melancholy, ragged little clearing where the ruined cabin of the lost Elmer Joy huddled forlorn, turning its sightless eyes to the rain-soaked mountains. They could not believe that all that day they had traveled a great circle, completed now by their return to the abandoned claim.

"Well"—Holt paused to swallow a lump in his throat—"well, boys—we're back—again. Let's be making camp in the shack."

"No!" groaned Flint. "I'll stay out here. I—why, yes, you're right, Holt!"

"Of course he's right!" Pierce echoed gruffly. "Who wants to sleep in the rain? Not me! And say, we're going to sleep pretty hungry to-night—just a little bacon, no bread, and only the grounds that are in the coffee-pot for drink."

They took the news in silence. In silence they scrambled off the rocks and down the slope to the cabin. At its gaping door they paused as if by common consent, and stared dubiously into the shack, breathing the taint of its mold.

"Home again!" Pierce forced a laugh. He added unexpectedly, and in a voice that cracked: "I hope I never see this hole again in all my life!"

Dinner finished their scraps of food. The fire burned brightly this night, for they had found better wood, but none of them took any comfort from it. By common consent, unspoken, they avoided discussion of Flint's faulty leadership, though secretly they thought of nothing else. Pierce's several attempts to start conversation died at birth. They sprawled uneasily, their eyes turning back and forth about the cabin. When their glances met, they looked aside in hurried confusion.

"I'm going to turn in," Holt announced. "It's a hard trip over the old trail, and we've got to make it to-morrow."

He spread his blanket where the shelter of the wall left a reasonably dry floor.

"Me, too," Pierce concurred, and crawled into the lower bunk.

Flint remained staring into the fire with unwinking eyes.

Holt was quickly asleep. Pierce kept turning to Flint with an irritated stare. Finally he spoke.

"For Pete's sake, Flint, roll up in your blanket and quit staring in that—that damnable way!"

"Huh?" Flint roused. "Oh, yes, Pierce—sure, I'm just turning in."

He hastened about the homely task as if anxious to please. Pierce realized with sudden wonder that Flint had ceased to be the leader. Marveling at this, he dozed off.

The room was still light and warm when he wakened at the sound of a voice. Somebody was talking in a low, monotonous, hurried tone. For a second Pierce puzzled to understand words before he stared about.

A man was crouched against the hearth—Flint. He was staring at the floor, and Pierce shuddered to see his eyes so widely open that white showed all about the black pupils. Flint's lips moved, and his voice continued the monologue, but the words seemed formless nonsense.

"Cut it out, you fool!" groaned Pierce, climbing from his bunk, shivering with jangling nerves. "Come out of it, Flint!"

The sleep-walker crouched there, unmoved. He gave no indication that the words had reached his brain.

Pierce seized him by a shoulder, shook him, and slapped his face with an open hand. Every muscle in Flint's body tensed. The wide eyes closed, blinked rapidly, and opened again to a normal gaze.

"Yes, what is it?" muttered Flint drowsily.

He knuckled his eyes and stared about him, gradually comprehending the hearth, himself, Pierce's agitated face. With comprehension he shrank back against the wall, sucking in a sharp, whistling breath, his hands groping behind him.

"Pierce," he whispered, "did I, was I—*walking?*"

"You certainly were," snapped Pierce. "Come back!"

"Listen, Pierce." Flint grasped his wrist with a cold hand. "What did I do? Did I—"

"Well, nothing. You were huddled up there, looking at the floor, talking."

"*Talking?*"

"You might call it that. I couldn't make out what you said—gibberish, I guess. You kept staring at the floor all the time—"

"*Oh, God in heaven!*" Flint's tortured cry startled the crawling flesh along Pierce's spine. "First it was that compass," he croaked. "Look at it—gone clean crazy! It led me back—*here*. Then this! It isn't right. It isn't—healthy! I tell you it's getting my nerve—that crazy compass, this place!" Flint's voice was awful in its slow solemnity. "I wonder if he was right—if there is—"

"If who was right?"

A groan from Holt's bunk interrupted Pierce. Holt stirred uneasily in his sleep. Pierce lowered his voice.

"Forget it and come to bed," he commanded. "That bacon we've been eating is enough to give any man bad dreams, and it's too cold to stand here all night."

"Why, yes, Pierce, you're right. Sure, old man, you're dead right! Roll in, I'm coming soon as I warm up a bit."

Flint crouched over the fire, holding his hands close over the flames. Pierce heard the man's teeth click with chill as he sought his own nest of blankets.

Presently Pierce opened a drowsy eye.

"Flint," he whispered sharply, "don't be a fool. Turn in!"

Flint gave him a long, incomprehensible stare.

V

Holt and Pierce woke simultaneously.

"What was it?" called Holt.

"Why, it sounded like—I thought—"

A pistol-shot, not far away, stopped their wonderment. They sat up, exchanging stares across the dim room.

"Is he—is *he* up—there? Can you see?" chattered Pierce.

But Holt had risen, run to the door, and thrust his head into the gray light of a rainy dawn.

"Say, Pierce," he called, "come here! There's something—strike a match, will you?"

Pierce made out that Holt held something in his hand—a sheet of paper. He snapped a couple of matches in vain.

"Bring it to the fire," he grumbled nervously.

Crouching together, holding the sheet close to the dull glow, they made it out. When they had read, their eyes met in a prolonged stare.

Flint had written with pencil on the back of an old letter.

> Boys, I killed Joy. He's buried under the floor. It was an old quarrel; never mind what about, but I followed him all the way from California, and I did it, out there by the rocks. Then I hid the knife I did it with in the prospect hole. I thought I was safe all these years, but Holt's remark made me worry about that knife of mine, so I got it last night. You'll find it under my shirt, where I stuck it when Holt thought I was walking in my sleep. I was never sorry about Joy. Don't know that I am now; but, boys, there's something bigger than me, like that compass pulling me back here. It got me in my sleep to-night. I never walked before in my life. All I know is I can't stand it any longer. It's got me. Holt, maybe you were right about divine justice. When you read this I'll know the answer.

They found Flint by Joy's old prospect hole, the scene of that long-ago murder. He had fired two bullets into his breast, and must have died quickly. The compass had fallen, or Flint had taken it from his pocket. It lay on his breast.

Pierce stared down at the body, and an uncontrollable fit of shivering made his teeth rattle. Instinctively he moved close to Holt and laid a shaking hand on his companion's arm.

"Oh, God!" he cried shakily. "Get me away from this place! "Holt—Holt, let's go. It's horrible here. It gives me the creeps. Look—look, Holt, that compass on his breast!"

Holt's eyes blazed with fervor. The gesture of his upraised hand was unconsciously dramatic.

"God's vengeance on a murderer," he intoned. "Let no man think to escape the divine wrath. Look, Pierce, it got even Flint." He knelt beside the body and thrust his hand under Flint's flannel shirt. He brought forth a rusted hunting-knife—the knife that had killed Joy, that Flint had concealed among the rocks of the old working. "It lay against his heart," he chanted. "A burden of guilt no man can hope to—"

Pierce leaped back with a yell of terror, his eyes rolling.

"Look!" he cried, pointing a shaking finger. "Look, Holt! It's alive—*the compass*. It's trying to—follow—the knife!"

The compass-needle was fluttering, instinct with mysterious vitality.

Then Pierce laughed with a sharp,

hoarse, coughing note that somehow expressed triumph. Stooping beside the dead man, he detached the compass from its leather thong. He rose, chuckling hysterically, shaken still by his recent fright, but rapidly regaining his rosy color and his normal outlook on the world.

FLINT'S LIPS MOVED, AND HIS VOICE CONTINUED THE MONOLOGUE, BUT THE WORDS SEEMED FORMLESS NONSENSE

"Well?" frowned Holt, instinctively on guard.

"See here, Holt—look at this! I'll show you what was wrong with that compass of Flint's. Here goes your mystery up in smoke! Flint's compass was all right all the time. It's the knife hid under his shirt that fooled him. Look at it—the blade's been magnetized; it pulled the needle off the north every time Flint looked at it." Triumphantly Pierce demonstrated the attraction between compass-needle and magnetized steel.

"It's a magnet," he chanted. "That's what, nothing but a piece of electrified steel—any kid could tell you that. And Flint, the poor fool, didn't know it. He got scared—and we used to think him the strongest-willed man in the settlement! He gave himself away over something any fool could have reasoned out. Ha, so that's your divine wrath!"

"Is that so?" cried Holt, on the defensive. "Well, then, how did that blade get magnetized, since you know so much? Don't you suppose if Flint had done it, even years ago, he'd have remembered when the compass—"

"Now, wait a minute!" cried Pierce. "Wait a second, and I think I can answer that. Watch now!"

Pierce passed the rusted knife along the stone wall of Elmer Joy's old prospect, and chuckled gleefully, for the steel blade had clung to the smooth rock, and the knife hung suspended.

"There you are!" he shouted. "Simple as A B C. Lodestone—magnetized rock—that's the answer! Divine jus-

tice—murder will out—bunk! Flint hid the knife in the magnetite Joy had mined, and it took on magnetism all the years it was lying there. The magnetism deranged his compass—we traveled in a circle—the poor fool lost his nerve — and there you are!"

Holt stared in slow comprehension. Then the shadow of a triumphant smile twitched his melancholy face.

"All right," he agreed solemnly. "All right. Then just answer me this, Pierce—who put lodestone in those rocks where murder was done? *Who* put that there?"

The American Invasion of Canada

THE CHANGING RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES WITH ITS GREAT NORTHERN NEIGHBOR—A FRIENDLY OBSERVER BRIEFLY REVIEWS THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE PROSPECT FOR THE FUTURE

By F. A. McKenzie

SEVENTY-FIVE thousand immigrants settled in Canada during the great war. Of these, seventy thousand were Americans. Two generations ago, Canada obtained sixty per cent of her imports from Great Britain. Last year the value of her imports from Britain was $73,024,016, and of those from America, $746,937,509.

For untold years, schoolboys living on the borders of Maine and New Brunswick fought their neighbors across the line. There were set battles between the "Yanks" and the "Johnny Bulls." They raided each other's summer camps in the woods, and their picked champions were always ready for single-handed contests.

When Canada went to war the border battles ceased. When the call came for more men to take the place of the Canadians who had fallen at Ypres, the older boys of the mill district around Calais, Maine, held long, solemn, secret conferences. Soon parties of two and three started northward to join the Canadian ranks. They did not mind fighting their neighbors themselves, but they objected to others doing it.

I came on one of these Maine boys—I call him "boy" because he could not have been more than eighteen—in the fortified, ruined village of Callonne, north of Vimy, where his battalion was holding the line. He was already a sergeant, and he wore the ribbon of the Military Medal, earned by a deed of exceptional gallantry.

"Why did you join the Canadians?" I asked him.

"I live in northern Maine," he replied. "I knew the Canadians. When the war began, we boys in my village talked it over, and made up our minds that the Huns were wrong; so I crossed the bridge at Calais and enlisted. I was not the only one."

As a matter of cold statistics, there were ten thousand Americans in the Canadian ranks before America came into the war.

The relations between America and Canada are changing. The two people are becoming daily more and more one.

Compare the life of any western Canadian city with that of an American city of the same size. Take Winnipeg, for example. It is built in American style. There are the same kind of sky-scrapers, office-buildings, hotels, and stores. The homes follow the American plan, with central heating, the abundant use of electricity and labor-saving appliances, and the same servant problem.

The citizen eats like an American. He starts his breakfast with grapefruit or apple sauce; he drinks iced water, and even, after the manner of Mr. Bryan, professes to like grape-juice; waffles and shredded wheat are no mystery to him; his club serves him with

imperial squab and hashed-browned potatoes. His daughter is as fond of ice-cream sodas and orange sundaes as is her sister in Washington. The monster store where his wife makes her purchases might be planted down in Chicago and seem to belong to the place. He reads mostly American magazines and novels, and his motion-pictures are nearly all obtained from Los Angeles.

The likeness goes deeper. The system of education for his children is virtually the American public-school system. In civic life the same problems face him. In his recent labor flurry, Chicago and Winnipeg radicals were working hand in hand. He will talk with you about the enforcement of the prohibition law and the hastening of the union of the churches. He will tell you, with glee, how they "cleaned up" in politics, and "turned out the rascals." Just now he is worried over the shortage of housing accommodation, as are the people of most American cities. One finds in him the same fine community spirit, and the same readiness to join up in groups and give unlimited time and energy for public service. Essentially, despite artificial political division, the men of the Middle West are one, whether living north or south of the forty-ninth parallel.

THE CANADA OF YESTERDAY

For more than a century Canada was America's poor neighbor to the north. Her progress was slow. Many of her most enterprising sons, seeing greater possibilities away from home, came south. Had Canada been able to retain her own people as well as those she attracted to her shores, her population to-day would be fully fifteen millions, instead of a little more than half that; but even the immigrants, brought from Europe by intensive advertising campaigns, crossed the border shortly after their arrival.

The attitude of the two peoples was unsympathetic. United Empire Loyalists, who had moved north after the War of Independence, handed down to their children a sense of bitterness. In the Civil War, America charged Canada with helping the Confederates. Shortly after the close of that war Fenians started out from United States territory to invade Canada.

The Canadian prided himself on his distinctive traditions. It was a sign of loyalty, for example, to use a salt-cellar and a salt-spoon, like the English, in place of shaking your salt from a bottle with a perforated top.

The opening of the West, following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway, marked the commencement of a new era of Canadian prosperity. About the year 1899, the tide of population that had been flowing from north to south, turned. New England farmers found that they could settle their sons on good wheat-lands in Saskatchewan for a quarter of what it would cost them in Minnesota. The procession of America farmers to the Canadian northwest began—a procession that has been growing since then, year after year.

Men soon found that while the other immigrants to Canada formed isolated groups, maintaining their own customs, reading their own newspapers, worshiping in their own churches, Americans, Canadians, and British-born amalgamated at once, became associates in the same clubs, were partners in business. Then came the great war, which sealed the attachment with blood.

The war gave America an exceptional advantage in promoting trade relations. For years high-tariff barriers had separated America and Canada, while Britain had a preference in Canadian markets. The British had very wisely made far-reaching efforts to promote British migration and to increase British trade; but now British manufacturers were too busy producing war material to study oversea markets, and the man who would have been the British immigrant was otherwise engaged in France and Belgium. There was nothing to hinder the flow of American population or trade. Special war-time tariff relaxations broke down some of the barriers.

American enterprises have sprung up

EDITORIAL NOTE—The author of this article is a Canadian by birth, and has long served as chief European correspondent for a group of leading Canadian newspapers. He and Jack London were tent-mates during the Russo-Japanese War, when McKenzie represented the London *Daily Mail*. Later he became editor of the weekly edition of the London *Times*, but when the great war broke out he went to the western front as a correspondent. Last year he revisited Canada from coast to coast, delivering a series of lectures on the war. During the present year he has been investigating economic and business conditions in the United States, and has published the result of his inquiries under the title of "America's Seven-Leagued Boots."

everywhere in Canada. In the city of Toronto alone more than a hundred American manufacturers have branch establishments, as against eight British. The Canadian Club in London is a comparatively small affair, without a clubhouse. The Canadian Club in New York occupies an entire floor of the Hotel Belmont, and is looking out for extensions to its quarters.

America controls the Canadian amusement industry. Canadian newspapers receive most of their European news through the services of the American Associated Press. At least one hundred copies of American magazines sell in Canada for one that is Canadian or British printed. The biggest chain of hotels, outside of those owned by the railroads, is in the hands of an American group.

Canadian labor of the moderate school is knit up with the American Federation: while the men of the more extreme group are promoting, with the radicals of the Western States, the one big union. When I wished to engage a cinematograph-operator in Toronto to accompany me on a lecturing tour, I had to sign terms with the walking delegate of an American union.

Conventions of American business men in Canada, and *vice versa,* are frequent; British-Canadian conventions are very rare. To-day the American farmer is becoming more and more the dominating factor in Alberta and Saskatchewan. And baseball has taken the place of lacrosse as the national game.

Two currents of population can be observed. American farmers continue to flow into the west. Canadian young men, released from military service, are making for American cities, drawn by the high wages offered there. Detroit is their favorite.

"Our young men will not come back to us," said a citizen of a beautiful and prosperous Ontario country town as he drove me through its streets. "We need them. There is abundant work here, and good prospects; but they have tasted life. They demand the excitement and movement of big cities. They go to New York."

The growth of trade between Canada and the United States has been one of the outstanding features of recent years. Geographical position gives the American manufacturer an advantage far outweighing the British preference. Now that the war is over, the British will make determined efforts to recover lost ground, and their competition will be more formidable than ever before. They have learned lessons of industrial efficiency whose full effects are yet to be felt. The Commercial Intelligence Department of the British government has been greatly improved. A new type of man has been brought in—keen, wisely selected, well paid. The American exporter who attempts to ignore British competition will discover sooner or later—probably sooner—that he has made the mistake of his life.

The handicap of the British manufacturer is distance. The American can place his main factory near the Canadian border and open a branch just over the line. Thus he escapes Canadian import duties. Wage-scales and office methods in both establishments are the same; the one staff does for both. The British manufacturer with a branch in Canada is running two establishments three thousand miles apart, with diverse office methods, scales of wages, ways of work. If he wishes to sell his goods in Canada without a branch factory, he must keep a big supply of spare parts in Toronto or Montreal. The American can obtain spare parts in a few hours from over the border.

The dry-goods merchant in Ottawa or Toronto who wishes to study the new fashions naturally goes to New York, in place of purchasing from the samples of some enterprising British drummer. A night in the train brings him to New York; he looks forward to the journey as a holiday, and he sees and learns more in an hour than he could in a week from any set of samples.

Everything indicates the growth of reciprocity between the United States and Canada. The statesmen on both sides have so far bungled the matter. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, father of the British preference, fought and lost a general election on a reciprocity program. His defeat was in part due to the remark of an American statesman, to the effect that reciprocity would be the first step to annexation.

THE NEW CANADA OF THE WEST

The west is the home of the reciprocity movement in Canada, and the east the headquarters of protection. The east represents the manufacturer and the financier, and the west the farmer. Up to recently, the east dominated; but now every year adds to the strength of the west.

I recently spent a short time in Saskatchewan, the stronghold of reciprocity. No

one could mix with the farmer politicians of Regina without realizing that here are the kind of men who have a way of getting what they want — beefy men, heavy and square-jawed, who keep on and on, till they bear their opponents down by sheer weight and obstinacy.

The manufacturers of the east, realizing the danger of losing their highly privileged position, have been trying by a campaign of education in the newspapers to bring the farmer to their point of view.

"Why should we pay forty per cent more for our farm machinery and autos in order to enrich the Ontario manufacturers?" ask the agriculturists.

The manufacturers publish half-page and full-page advertisements showing that a plow in Arakasha, North Dakota, costs one per cent more than the same plow in Asikisha, Saskatchewan; but the farmer who lives neither in Arakasha nor Asikisha refuses to be convinced.

The present tendency of public opinion in Canada is not overfriendly to the manufacturer. People feel that he had an exceptionally good time during the war, and can afford to suffer a bit. This year, the Dominion government is reducing its duties in favor of the western farmer; but Canada will soon have to face another reciprocity campaign, more formidable than before.

Americans are more and more becoming the farmers, particularly the wheat farmers, of western Canada. It is estimated that sixty per cent of the Alberta farmers to-day are Americans. What is more, they have picked out the eyes of the land. There is a reason.

Twenty years ago skilful advertising campaigns to sell Canadian lands were begun in the United States. Monster excursion parties were organized from Minnesota and Dakota to view the new land. Much of the advertising of Canadian town lots was little better than a swindle, but the farm-lands offered were a good, sound business proposition. During the period from 1901 to 1918, fifty per cent more Americans than British made entry for western Canadian homesteads.

When it came to buying lands, the Americans were often willing to pay a price that seemed extravagant to others. The Canadian had been accustomed to cheap lands. He had been educated on the slogan, "a hundred and sixty acres free." He thought twenty to thirty dollars an acre a good price for improved farms. The American, coming from more closely settled districts, was willing to pay more. This enabled him to have his pick, and his money is now returning manifold. Last year many farmers earned the equivalent of their entire investment from their crops.

There are still bargains to be found in western lands by the man who knows his business. Here is a case where knowledge is money. The buyer who has to trust to the judgment of others will probably lose.

The farmer is not the only American investor in Canada. The supreme nickel-mine of the world, at Sudbury, Ontario, is owned by a New York corporation. Americans have secured many valuable concessions in British Columbia. The big development of the Atlantic coast in recent years owes much to American capital.

CONTRARY CURRENTS OF OPINION

I do not profess that the growth of Americanism in Canada has been viewed with universal satisfaction there. One strong group regards the *rapprochement* of the English-speaking peoples with suspicion and resentment. Their feeling is directed not so much against the United States as against England. They fear that England may be willing to sacrifice Canadian interests to please America.

"In order to maintain comfortable relations with the United States, the United Kingdom has been indifferent to Canadian interests," recently wrote John S. Ewart, a well-known Canadian publicist.

Twenty years ago Sir Charles Tupper, long the dean of Canadian statesmen, declared in the Dominion House that during the many years he had held office as high commissioner in London, he had been very forcibly struck with the unwillingness of the British government to allow any circumstances whatever even to threaten a collision with the United States.

"They are reluctant to do with the United States what they would do with any other country in the world," he maintained.

"England does not know what she is about," one Canadian representing this small group said to me. "She is bewitched by the glamour of mere bigness. All this talk about English-speaking union is a dangerous delusion. The Yankee will dominate everything. The lion and the lamb may lie down together, but the lamb will be inside the lion, and we are the lamb."

Even a feeble joke on my part that he did not look much like a lamb failed to soothe him.

"Encourage this movement," he went on, "and in ten years the Union Jack will have vanished from this continent. There will be no Dominion of Canada. America will have swallowed it, and Britain will have aided and encouraged her."

In Europe, last autumn, Americans, Canadians, and British were practically as one. Earlier in the year leading officers in the Canadian Corps in France had urged me to do everything that I could to help to have the American troops brigaded for training with the Canadians.

"We like them and they like us," one Canadian declared to me. "They're dandy fighters, and then some. We talk the same language, use the same slang, and have both lived the same kind of life before joining up. We both ought to be together."

In England the same cordiality was universal.

In Canada, when I arrived late in the autumn, the atmosphere was not everywhere so warm. The very closeness of association between Americans and Canadians helps to promote minor friction. There was a feeling that American accomplishments had been overadvertised. And, above all, the Canadians were very, very tired of the American war film.

Nearly the whole of the Canadian film circuits obtain their supplies from the United States. It is only natural that American films, prepared for the American public, drew their illustrations from American sources, displayed the Stars and Stripes at every opportunity, and were unresting exponents of good Americanism. The average Canadian became surfeited with this unvarying American diet.

"Didn't our Canadian boys do anything?" he would shout, when some fresh American war film was shown.

The American producer was not to blame for this. The Canadian market was not big enough for him to prepare special versions for it. It is up to the Canadians to prepare special Canadian films; and now they are doing so.

CANADA A UNIFYING FORCE

The barriers between America and Canada are breaking down; yet, while Canada is ever drawing nearer to the United States, she retains unbroken her sense of association with Great Britain. She stands between the two peoples, not as a separatist, but as a unifying force. Minor friction, serious as it may seem at times, will be ground to nothing. Community of thought and interest are growing all the time.

On more than one occasion, in the early days of the Peace Conference in Paris, the Canadian premier acted as the friendly Anglo-American intermediary, smoothing out temporary frictions. Americans and British both felt that they could talk freely with him and he would understand them. He became the adjuster of differences. Canada may play the same rôle in years ahead, and on a bigger scale.

If Canada is being Americanized, Canadianism is spreading in America. America gave Canada her present high commissioner in London; Canada gave President Wilson one of the leading members of his Cabinet. Each country has much to learn of the other, and each comes to the other bearing gifts.

Canada has for generations been a model to the world in respect for law and order. It is still, in large parts of the Atlantic provinces and in Ontario, the home of the old Presbyterianism and Puritanism. America can open out for Canada greater industrial possibilities. The union between the two lands is more potent than any alliance based on treaty. It is a blending of kindred peoples.

TIME AND MEMORY

THE many things we do and say
  Time tries to pilfer in his flight;
But Memory meets him on his way
  With outstretched hands and eyes of light.
She looks into his furrowed face,
  Gives pause to scythe and hour-glass;
And thus, through her supernal grace,
  The vital things can never pass.

William Hamilton Hayne

ONE OF THE GARDEN WALKS AT MELLODY FARM, LINED WITH WHEATLEY ELMS GRAFTED ON ENGLISH ELMS

Mellody Farm, the Country Home of J. Ogden Armour

THE ESTATE AT LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS, WHICH THE WELL-KNOWN CHICAGO MILLIONAIRE IS DEVELOPING BOTH AS AN ORNATE COUNTRY MANSION AND AS A PLACE FOR PRACTICAL FARMING

By Robert H. Moulton

A FEW years ago there were near Lake Forest, Illinois, which has long been a favorite place for the country residences of the wealthy men of Chicago, a number of contiguous farms containing, in all, twelve hundred acres of practically unadorned prairie land. These farms had always led a humdrum, colorless, and somewhat disappointed life; but such are the extraordinary whims of fate that they suddenly, and without warning, became one of the most ornate and highly developed spots in America.

Mr. J. Ogden Armour, whose name is a figure in modern business, not only in America, but throughout the world, chanced to look over this tract of land, and he decided to make it the means of carrying out a long-cherished ambition. His idea was to establish a country place which would not only furnish his family and himself with all the comforts of home, but which would be large enough to supply him with a field for exploitation and development during many years to come; in which, in the intervals of business, or in

case of retirement from active work, he might share the enjoyment that almost every normal man finds in cultivating and improving his own acres.

So he bought the farms in question, and issued a mandate that there should be constructed there a house and gardens in the

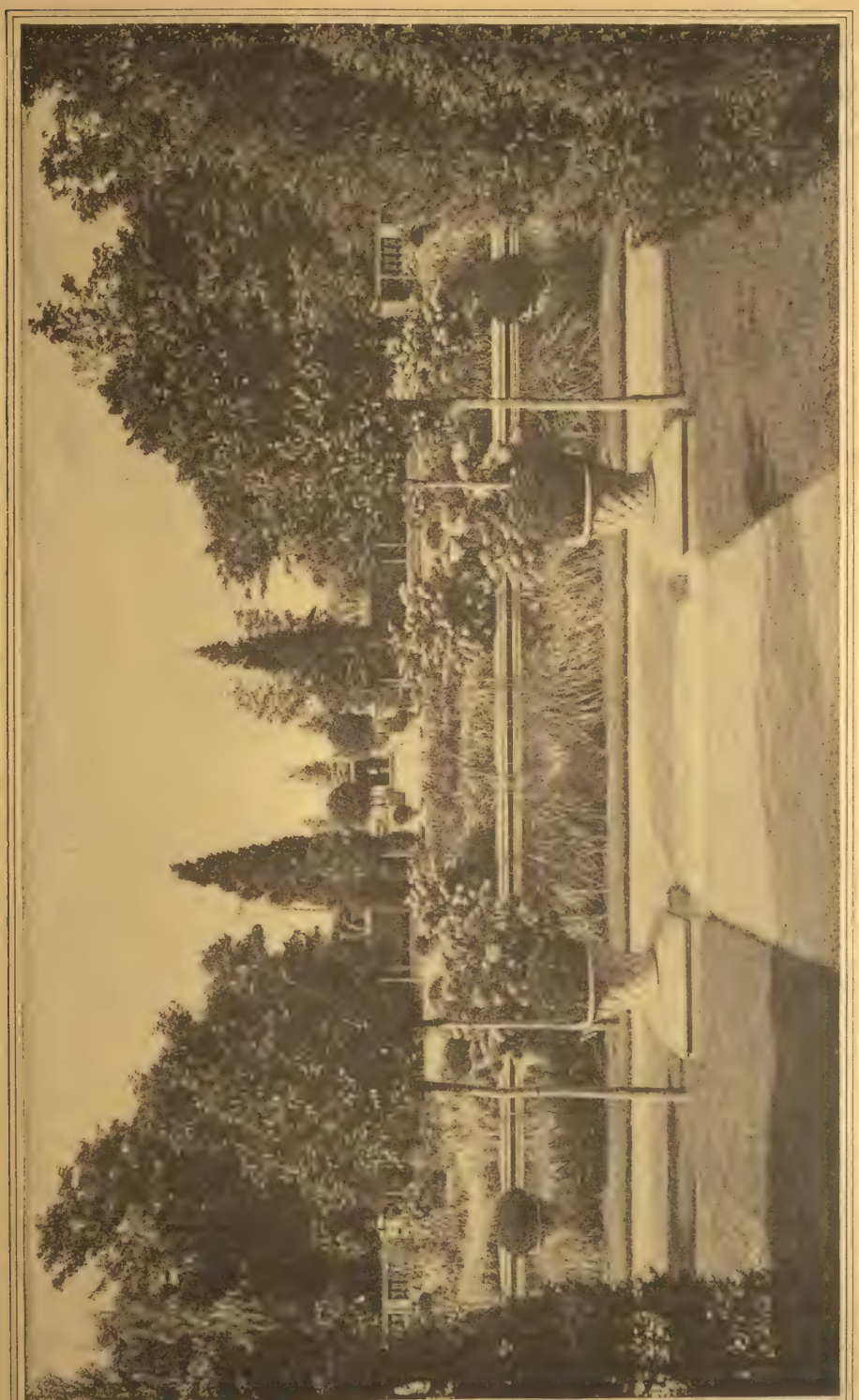
MELLODY FARM—REAR VIEW OF THE HOUSE, SHOWING THE TERRACE THAT OVERLOOKS THE WATER-GARDEN

planning of which limitations of cost need not be considered. At the same time he specified that the designers' plan should express ideas of rationality and beauty not less than of modesty and fitness. And, lest his original plan of creating a real farm should be lost sight of, instructions were given that not more than fifty acres of the land should be devoted to the house and gardens. The rest he proposed to cultivate as opportunities offered and disposition inclined.

Much work has been done at Mellody Farm since the land was purchased. A remarkably complete and comfortable house has been built, hundreds of gardeners have been tilling, enriching, and beautifying the ground about it, and the choicest trees, shrubs, and plants have been brought from all over the world for its adornment. Around it are gardens, terraces, groves, and lawns, dotted here and there with pavilions, summer-houses, arbors, pergolas, trellises, and fountains, all in the most effective combination that skill and taste can devise. The estate has a dozen entrance-gates, and within its boundaries are a score of miles of driving roads, while Indian trails, carpeted with tan-bark run through the woods.

THREE STYLES OF GARDEN-PLANNING

When an architect sets about to build a country home of such magnitude as this, he has three general models before him, each of which has its advantages. One plan is that of the Italian villa, built upon



PART OF THE WATER-GARDEN AT MELLODY FARM, SHOWING THE ORNAMENTAL SURROUNDINGS OF ONE OF THE POOLS—IN THE DISTANCE, AT THE END OF THE VISTA, IS ONE OF THE ENTRANCES TO THE ROSE-GARDEN

a terraced hill, full of fountains and cascades of running water, with covered walks, flights of stone steps, and modern or antique statuary.

The second type of villa is the French. The great places in France are as a rule on flat ground, and the French architects, while skilled in formal landscape work, relied more upon their flower-gardens and spreading lawns than did the Italians.

The third type is the English, in which groups of fine trees, winding drives and paths, yew hedges, and glimpses of water—rivers or ponds—are the central and predominant motives.

Mr. Armour's place might be called a happy blending of these three styles, without exactly paying tribute to any of the so-called historical types. It is a logical rendering of the plans and materials which the architect decided to use, and its undeniable beauty is due to the discreet use of these

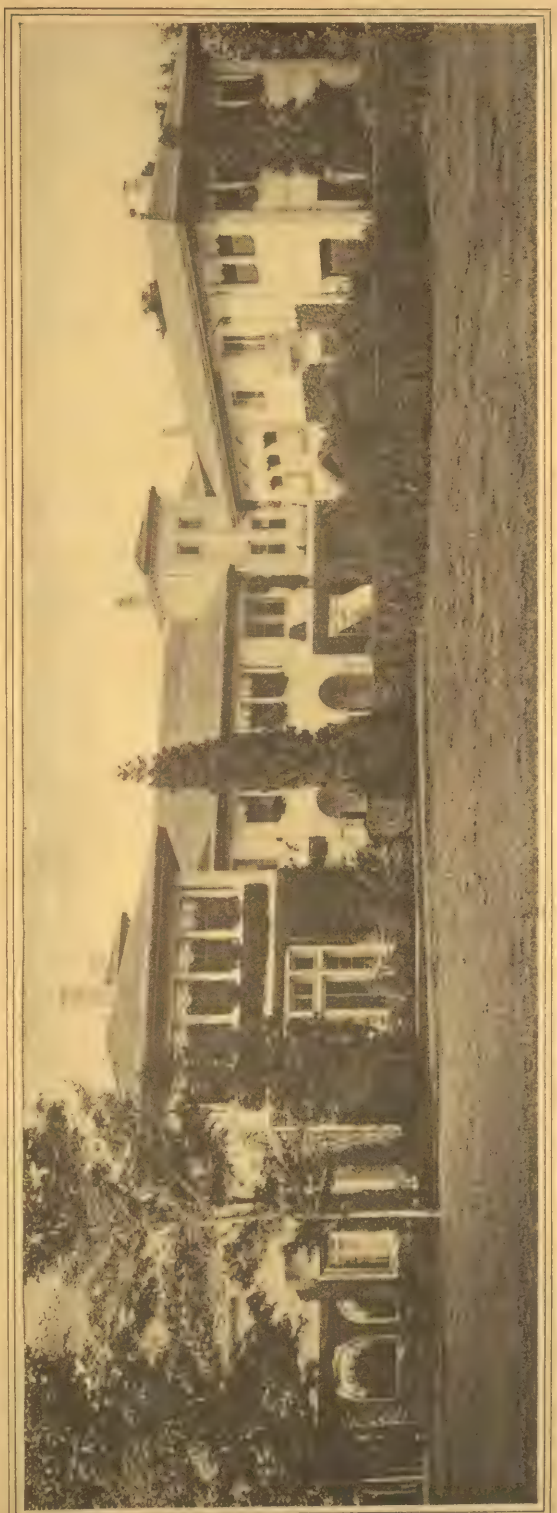
THE CASINO, A BUILDING OF FANCIFUL DESIGN THAT OVERLOOKS THE WATER-GARDEN—WITHIN IT, ON A MARBLE TABLE, STANDS A BRONZE STATUE OF MERCURY

materials and the absence of all straining for effect. The note of artistic unity, of a perfectly blended and agreeable ensemble, remains the greatest of the architect's achievements.

As you drive out from Lake Forest, you are scarcely prepared for what is to reveal itself at Mellody Farm. The first view of the estate is obtained from the public road, when the visitor comes upon an imposing entrance lodge and gates. The lodge is of the same design and material as the house. The fine grilled-iron gateway is of Italian design, its shining black being relieved here and there by a touch of gold.

Within the grounds, the driveway leading to the mansion crosses a monumental concrete bridge, built by Mr. Armour, spanning the tracks of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad, which runs through a corner of the estate. To conceal the railroad from view, Mr. Armour built a ten-foot brick wall, which, in turn, is rapidly being covered by a luxuriant growth of ivy. The wall is half a mile long, and cost two hundred thousand dollars.

A little way beyond the bridge the road runs through a piece of forest — the only natural woodland on the estate. Then the visitor comes in sight of the house, and a straight stretch of driveway, lined with a wonderful hedge of privet procured from the Amur River, takes him to the north entrance. Here he finds himself in a forecourt with a fountain in the center, around which the road turns in a circle, passing the loggia at the main entrance and continuing right through the *porte-cochère,* which is under the northwest wing of the house, between Mr. Armour's private office and the side entrance. The driveway then continues in a westerly direction toward the stables and the garage.



MELLODY FARM—VIEW OF THE HOUSE FROM THE NORTHEAST, SHOWING THE FORECOURT, THE MAIN ENTRANCE, THE TWO WINGS, AND ONE OF THE OBSERVATION-TOWERS

A VISTA THROUGH THE ROSE-GARDEN, SHOWING ONE OF THE ENTRANCES AND FOUR FINE BAY-TREES WHICH COST FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS APIECE

VIEW OF THE WATER-GARDEN, FROM THE LOWER TERRACE — BEYOND THE POOL IS THE CASINO, THE INTERIOR OF WHICH IS SHOWN IN THE ENGRAVING ON PAGE 278

The walls of the forecourt are covered with a foreign vine, *ampelopsis Veitchii,* which is carefully trimmed away from the marble and around the windows. The rooms on the second story extend over the *porte-cochère* and most of the loggias, thus giving to this story a considerably larger area than that of the main floor. Except for two observation-towers at the corners of the forecourt, there is no third story. Overhanging eaves surround the whole building, and the harmonious relation between the marble-work of the exterior and the stuccoed brick walls, which have the same finish throughout, is one of the features of the house.

ORNAMENTAL SEAT, WITH A SMALL FOUNTAIN, WHICH OCCUPIES A CORNER OF THE WATER-GARDEN

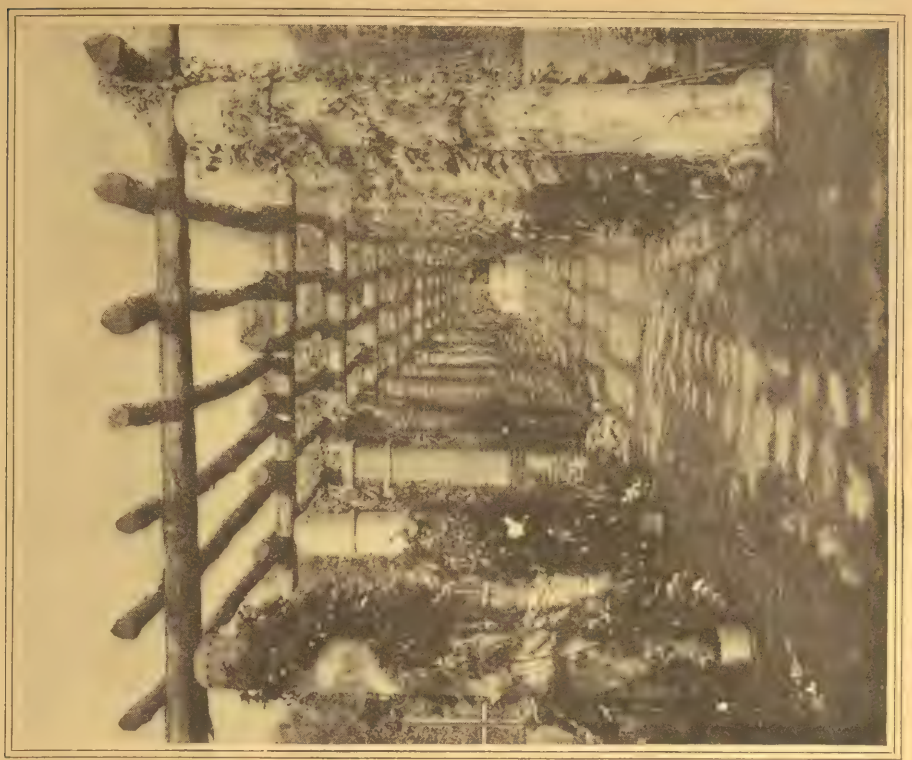
Passing now to the east side of the building, we find a vista of velvety lawn, bordered with trees and shrubs, and adorned with small pools and marble benches, stretching away for a distance of a quarter of a mile. At the far end we see a rest-temple, and, just beyond, we get a glimpse of the artificial lake that Mr. Armour has had constructed.

A feature of the walk along this green avenue, and of other walks about the place, is the pavement of roughly hewn, irregular-shaped pieces of white stone, between the edges of which the grass is kept closely cropped, producing a very pleasant and natural effect. The rest-temple is a stucco structure with a latticed roof, supported by four sculptured columns in the shape of figures representing Winter, Spring, Summer, and Autumn.

TERRACES AND WATER-GARDEN

Retracing one's steps over this grassy walk, then passing through the winter-garden—a magnificent hall fifty-six feet in length and twenty-four in width, in the center of the house on the south side—we find ourselves on the south terrace, commanding a view of the water-garden. Here man's work is only that of an accomplice of nature. Stretching away in one long perspective, with a casino visible at the extreme end, the water-garden contains three ornamental pools, two near the house, with a carpet of green lawn between, and a third beyond, with a terrace on each side of it leading up to the casino, which stands on a still higher terrace.

Around the pools grow fuchsias, dieffenbachias, irises, abutilons, and tuberous be-



A VINE-COVERED PERGOLA THAT SKIRTS THE PORTION OF THE MELLODY FARM GROUNDS DEVOTED TO CROQUET AND TENNIS

A VINE-COVERED WALL AND ORNAMENTAL STONEWORK THAT FORM PART OF THE SURROUNDINGS OF THE CASINO

gonias, while in the water many goldfish flash and sparkle as they dart among the lilies that bloom on the surface of the water throughout the summer. A variety of shrubs—including several species of spiræa, cornus, and viburnum—are set about in formal groups, while enclosing the whole there is a background of stately lindens, hard maples, and cedars. On each side of the pools, leading from the house to the casino, is a walk lined with Wheatley elms grafted on English elms, a process that produces compact, symmetrical trees with small leaves.

The casino that closes the perspective of the water-garden is a building of stone and terra-cotta, surmounted by a tiled roof with overhanging eaves, and in its design the architect indulged his fancy uncontrolled by the practical conditions which must necessarily prevail in house architecture. Its open sides give an unobstructed view of the sky, with a bronze statue of Mercury, standing on a marble table, outlined against it.

From the windows of the winter-garden, and from the terraces leading down to the water-garden, nothing but sky is visible beyond the casino; but once the casino is reached, and the visitor turns his gaze to the south, a surprise awaits him. In this direction there is a view across an artificial lake of twenty-five acres, surrounding two picturesque islands, with the open country beyond. Natural springs furnish the water-supply of the lake, and in winter, when the surface freezes, they can be seen boiling up over the ice.

A variety of wild fowl, including mallard ducks, blue-winged and green-winged teal, mandarin and wood ducks, white swans, silent geese, Canadian geese, and demoiselle cranes, make their home around the lake and on the islands. Along the water's edge are planted such trees as willows, alders, and larches, interspersed with thickets of spiræa and viburnum. At the casino end of the tree-lined walks leading from the house are latticed walls, vine-clad and cool, and near them stand two sheltered, semicircular marble seats, each with a small fountain in the center of its high-backed walls.

ROSE-GARDEN AND ORCHARD

As you walk down the path on the left from the casino, you catch the perfume of roses, and a moment later you come to the

THE LAKE AT MELLODY FARM, AS SEEN FROM THE CASINO—THIS IS A SHEET OF WATER TWENTY-FIVE ACRES IN EXTENT, STOCKED WITH MANY KINDS OF WILD DUCKS AND GEESE

THE REST-TEMPLE, ONE OF THE MANY ORNAMENTAL FEATURES OF THE GROUNDS OF MELLODY FARM—THE FIGURES FORMING THE PILLARS REPRESENT THE FOUR SEASONS

entrance of the rose-garden. Stone steps, with pedestals and statues at each end, lead to this fragrant spot, and just inside it are two bay-trees which cost five hundred dollars apiece, and which are considered the finest and most perfect specimens in the United States. A similar pair stands at the opposite end of this enclosure. A feature of the rose-garden is a series of frames in the shape of open umbrellas over which the roses climb, affording shelter, if desired, from the too-zealous rays of the summer sun. When the roses go, their lovely hues are replaced by the brilliant colors of the gladiolus.

Leaving this enchanting place, one can pass to a Dutch garden on one side, to croquet-lawns and tennis-courts on the other, or, through the far entrance, to the ordered fruit-trees of an orchard garden. At the west end of this last another charming vista looms up. Through an avenue of trees is visible a vine-covered pergola, with a large and decorative tank from which water overflows into a miniature pool where goldfish swim.

In the rear of the orchard-garden are greenhouses, where there is a splendid show of flowers throughout the year, and next to these a hothouse which furnishes the finest fruits—peaches, pears, figs, and grapes—during the winter months. As yet no permanent farm-buildings have been erected, but now that the war is over, work on these is expected to begin. They are sure to be the last word in completeness and efficiency of arrangement and equipment, a model of what the scientific farm of the twentieth century should be.

Only one more detail of the estate remains to be described. You reach it by a walk of a quarter of a mile to the west. It is a recreation-room which Mr. Armour has had built for the pleasure of his employees.

This is an artistic structure of one story and an attic, in which may be found all the conveniences, and a good many of the luxuries, of a city club-building. There is a noble fireplace in the center of the living-room; there are easy chairs and sofas, bookcases containing several hundred volumes, a billiard-table, tables for the current periodicals, and facilities for preparing and serving meals for as many as one hundred people at a time.

The Last Straw*

THE WINNING OF A GOOD WOMAN IN THE BAD LANDS

By Harold Titus

Author of "I Conquered," "Bruce of the Circle A," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

THE cow-hands at the H. C. Ranch are surprised when the new owner of the outfit turns out to be an attractive girl, and astonished when Jane Hunter chooses Dad Hepburn to be foreman by ordering the men to draw straws for the promotion. Tom Beck, who would have won had he not refused to draw, declines to drink a cocktail with his new employer that evening. He informs Jane that her cattle are being stolen, that things are in bad shape, and that she will have to live a different life to what she has been accustomed to in New York if she wishes to make good and win the respect of her neighbors. Piqued, Jane sets out to make this taciturn fellow like her.

A New York lover, Dick Hilton, arrives on the scene, rebukes Jane for heeding a rough-neck cow-puncher's puritanical lectures, and finds, to his surprise, that he has lost much of his hold upon the girl.

A slovenly nester, who passes the ranch with a fiery-looking daughter, causes caustic comment among the hands, one of whom, Two-Bits Beal, is anxiously awaiting the arrival of a brother who had become a minister.

At a saloon in town a loafer makes a remark that Tom Beck takes as a reflection upon Jane Hunter's character, and, quick as a flash, he makes the fellow eat his words at the point of a gun.

"You're a queer little yellow-head," Beck says to himself that night, as he looks toward Jane's window. "You're the kind that gets men into trouble, but maybe you're worth it!"

VI

JANE HUNTER was immersed in work up to her trim elbows. She had little time for anything else. Twice again Dick Hilton came to see her, riding a horse on the second visit, but his stays were not lengthy—and not satisfactory, because the girl had little thought for anything but ranch affairs.

For long hours she sat at the desk, which she had placed in a bay window that commanded a superb view of far ridges, and poured over records she had found. She discovered a detailed diary of events for the past ten years, a voluminous chronicle which the old colonel had kept more for the sake of self-expression than as an efficient record, but it served her well as a key to the fortunes of the property.

From time to time she sent for one of her men and quizzed him rigidly on some phase of the work with which he was particularly familiar, never satisfied until she had learned all that he could teach her. Every evening Dad Hepburn, the foreman, sat with her and discussed ranch affairs at length, Jane forcing him into argument to defend his statements.

While with the girl he maintained his paternal, patronizing attitude; yet he was not content, as was evident from the moroseness which he displayed before the men. He had been stripped of initiative until his authority was reduced to executing orders; this, despite the fact that Jane depended on him for most of her information.

Tom Beck watched the foreman's attitude carefully. Hepburn was chagrined, yet dogged, as if staying on and accepting the situation for a definite purpose. It had been decided, after Jane had argued away Hepburn's objections, that Beck was to have a free hand with the horses, gathering the saddle stock and getting it in shape for the summer's work, breaking young horses, watching the mares and colts. This made it unnecessary for Beck to look to

* *Copyright, 1919, by Harold Titus—This story began in the October number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

the older man for detailed orders, and delayed the clash that was bound to come between them.

Jane's approach to her responsibilities was considered admirable by the men, but it occasioned little comment. Their judgment of her was still suspended—that is, with the exception of Two-Bits Beal. Her first look had won him without reservation.

"She's smart!" he declared at frequent intervals. "She's the smartest girl I've ever seen—an' the loveliest!" The last three words were spoken with a drop in the voice which provoked laughter.

Once he said to Beck:

"My gosh, Tommy, how'd you like to have a wife like her?"

The other smiled cryptically.

"Now you're gettin' into a profound subject," he said. "It ain't wise to pick out a wife like you'd pick out a horse. There ain't much can fool a man who knows horses, when he looks one over careful like; but there's a lot about women that

JANE'S APPROACH TO HER RESPONSIBILITIES WAS CONSIDERED ADMIRABLE BY THE MEN, BUT THEIR JUDGMENT OF HER WAS STILL SUSPENDED

you can't know by lookin' 'em over and watching 'em step."

He was watching Jane "step," and though he still was the first to listen when others spoke of her qualities, his manner toward her was the least flattering of all.

After she had ridden the sorrel twice, each time accompanied by Beck or Hepburn, she sent Two-Bits to saddle him.

"What you doing with that horse?" Beck asked, looking up from the hoof of a colt which he was gently paring to reveal some hidden infection.

"She wants him to ride," the cowboy explained.

"Goin' alone?"

"Guess so."

"Then take that saddle off and put it on the little pinto."

"But she said to—"

"Makes no difference. You take it off, or I'll make you look like two bits, Mex!"

On finding her order miscarried, Jane demanded explanation.

"Tommy, he told me," Two-Bits said uneasily.

"But I ordered the sorrel—"

"And I told Two-Bits to give you this paint, ma'am," Beck said, the foot of the colt still between his knees.

"Why?" with a show of spirit.

"Because you ain't up to him yet, and he ain't down to you. If somebody was with you, it 'd be different. You can't ride him alone, ma'am."

She gave her head an indignant toss, and was about to demand the execution of her plan, but he turned back to his work, talking gently to the animal. Then, with a grudgingly resigned sigh, she walked toward the pinto, for there was something about Beck that precluded argument.

Again she told him of a contemplated visit to the ranches farther down the creek.

"Why, ma'am?" he asked.

"There are many things to talk over—plans for the summer's work and the like. Besides, I want to become acquainted."

"That last is fine," he said, smiling; "but I guess you'd better wait for the rest."

"Wait? What for?"

"Until you know, ma'am. You see, you've only been here a little while; you've learned a lot, but you don't know enough to talk business with anybody yet. It won't be good for you to go talking about something you don't understand."

"I think I am capable of judging that," she said bruskly. "I will go."

But she did not. She had intended to go the next day, but as she lay awake that morning she told herself that Beck was right—she did not know enough about her affairs to discuss her relationships with neighbors intelligently. She still smarted from his frankness, but the hurt was leavened by a feeling that behind his presumption had been consideration of her own welfare.

She tired quickly in the first days that she rode, and once, remarking on it, she drew this advice from Beck:

"You'd do a lot better without corsets."

Simply, bluntly, impersonally, and with so much assurance that she could not even reply. His observation had smacked of no disagreeable intimacy. She had told him that she tired; he had given her his idea of the cause.

She took off her corsets.

A day of cold rain came on. At noon the downpour abated for a time, and Jane asked Hepburn to ride down the creek with her to look over land that was to be cleared and irrigated.

"Have you got a slicker, ma'am?" Beck asked when she requested that a horse be saddled.

She had none.

"There ain't an extra one on the place," he said; "so I guess you'd better not go."

"But the rain is over. Anyhow, what hurt will a wetting do?"

"I don't guess the rain's all over," he said; "and to get wet and cold ain't a good thing for anybody. It 'd be a mighty bad thing for you. You're a city woman; you can't do these things yet."

An exasperating sense of inferiority came over her, bringing a helpless sort of rage. This man was not even her foreman, and yet he brought her up short, time after time. She started to tell him so, but changed her mind. Also, she changed her plans for the day.

Beck was not rough, not obtrusive, in any of this—just frank and simple; and when she bridled under it she saw that twinkle creep into his eye, as if she were a child and her spirit amused him.

But she did more than amuse. She could not see, she could not know. At night he roused from sleep and lay awake trying to fathom the sensations he experienced. In the daytime he rode without sufficient

thought for the work that was before him. At times he was impelled to be irritable toward her, and this because his stronger impulse was to be gentle.

He did not want to care for his woman, and he found himself caring in spite of himself. He rode to town and spent an evening with a waitress in the hotel, taking her to a picture-show, paying her broad compliments, seeing her pride rise because of his attentions; and he rode home before daylight, disgusted with himself. His life was being reshaped, his tastes, his desires. His caution against taking chances was being beaten down.

Jane commenced to ride with him regularly, and these rides grew longer as she found her endurance becoming greater, until they were together many hours each day; until, in fact, escorting her had become Beck's job. The ostensible purpose of this was to learn the country, and the manner of range work, but though she did learn rapidly their talk was largely personal. Beck was not responsive, and the more reserved he became the greater were Jane's efforts to force him to talk of himself.

These efforts netted her little, and after a time she abandoned them and adopted other means of winning his confidence.

Once she helped him gather a bunch of horses that had not been corralled for seasons. The way led down a steep point, and Jane was ahead, holding up the bunch while Beck crowded them from behind. She took the descent with a degree of hesitation, for the going—so steep that she was forced to clamp a hand behind her cantle to retain a seat—chilled her with fear. On the level she fanned the sorrel and kept ahead of the horses until she could lead them safely into a corral.

The gate closed, Jane looked at Beck with sparkling eyes, expecting a word of reward, but he only said:

"You've got to keep goin' with horses. The country's all got to look level to you. You slowed up bustin' off that point."

The rebuke hurt her—and stimulated her ambition.

He taught her to use a rifle, and she brought down her first deer, a yearling buck, at long range.

"I told you to hold just behind his shoulder; see where you hit," he said, indicating the wound, a handbreadth too far back.

She shot with his revolver, and he told her that she would never learn to use the weapon. She bade him teach her the rudiments of roping, and he decried the feminine movements of arms and body.

In all this he was quick to criticise, niggardly of praise; ready to teach, reluctant to grant progress.

She was resentful, but her resentment was no match for her determination. Now and then his rebukes whipped flushes to her cheeks, and more than once she left him with tears standing in her eyes, only to tell herself aloud that she *would* make him acknowledge her accomplishments.

Once, riding on alone after Jane had turned back toward the ranch, Beck encountered Sam McKee. The man had dismounted and was recinching when Tom passed him. He looked up with a baleful expression, as if he was impelled to do the H. C. rider great harm and was held back only by his cowardice. When Tom had passed, McKee mounted, and before he started on his way he turned to shout over his shoulder:

"Chaperon!"

In it he put all that contempt which small, timid boys put into their shouted taunts.

Beck was not angered, but it gave him something to think about.

Another time as, on his roan, he led the sorrel toward the gate to the house-yard, Hepburn smiled at him and said with scornful humor:

"A regular chaperon, ain't you?"

Tom did not reply, though it angered him. He thought about the remark at length, but the thing which interested him was that Hepburn had used the same word that McKee had used. Was that, Beck asked himself, mere chance?

They had ridden far to the eastward one afternoon, and, returning long after dark, Jane made a meal herself, and they ate together at her table. Beck was noticeably restrained, and hastened to leave as soon as he had finished.

"Can't you sit and talk with me a while?" she asked.

"I could, ma'am, but is it necessary?"

"Not necessary to the business, perhaps; but it might be necessary to a pleasant evening for me."

He gave her steady gaze for steady gaze, and then said:

"Anybody would think you were courtin' me, ma'am."

She laughed easily, yet her gaze wavered.

"And what if I should be?" she asked.

This disconcerted him, but he replied:

"It's likely I'd quit."

"I'm—wholly distasteful to you, then?"

"If I was to say yes, it 'd hurt your feelings, needless; so I won't. I don't mind tellin' you, though, that the country is calling me your chaperon."

"And does what people say worry you?"

"Not when they talk about something that I'm responsible for. I didn't hire out as a companion, ma'am."

She stepped closer, her hands behind her, and said:

"The first time you talked to me at any length you had a great deal to say about respect. No one had ever talked to me as you did. I took it because it was true, and I respected you. Since that time I have been trying to be worthy of the respect of you men; of yours particularly, because you are the only one with whom I have talked so frankly about myself. But at every turn you repulse me, drive me back. Nothing that I do seems to be pleasing to you. You are always picking on me, Tom Beck! Tell me, why do you do it?"

He eyed her calculatingly.

"What would you think if I told you, ma'am, that it was because I don't like you?"

"I would think it was not the truth."

He flushed, and this time his eyes fell from hers. She took another quick step forward.

"I would think just that, but I might be wrong." She breathed rapidly, one hand on a gold locket that was at her throat.

"CAN'T YOU SIT AND TALK WITH ME?" SHE ASKED. "ANYBODY WOULD THINK YOU WERE COURTIN' ME, MA'AM," TOM REPLIED

"I might think that you fear that becoming my friend would be dangerous, but I might not want to think that. You were the first man who ever dared tell me just how little I have amounted to. You are the first individual that ever made me feel ashamed of myself. You did those things; you opened my eyes, you showed me what real achievement is. Now I'm fighting for a place. I have won one thing—my self-respect. Now I'm going to win another—the respect of other people; and if I can win their respect I can win their friendship. I may be overconfident. Time will prove that. But there is one thing I want, Tom Beck, and that is your friendship. Before I get through, and if I succeed, you are going to be glad to be my—friend!"

There was challenge in her tone, which, with all its assurance, was sweet and gentle, almost appealing; and that combination of qualities indicated that her words did not express her whole thought. It steeled him, and with that mocking twinkle again he said:

"You seem quite sure, ma'am!"

"As sure as I have ever been of anything in my life."

But her assurance did not compare with her desire, for when he had gone she was seized with the fear that she had said too much, had gone too far. And that which she had boasted would be hers was to Jane Hunter a precious possession.

VII

At sunset a girl rider descended from the uplands into the shadows of Devil's Hole. The big brown which carried her picked his way slowly down the treacherous trail, nose low, ears forward, selecting his footing with care.

The girl sat braced back in her saddle. Her face was dark, her eyes brooding, but her mouth, though sternly set, showed a rueful droop at the corners.

Her mind was not on her progress. She was lost in a very definite consideration—something which stirred resentment, it was evident from her face. Finally she drew a sharp, deep breath of impatience.

"Oh, get along, you dromedary!" she muttered, and roweled her horse sharply.

The big beast sprang forward with a grunt, and went down the trail in long, shaking bounds. When they reached the level he crashed through the brush at a high lope, leaping little washes with great lunges, and bearing his light rider swiftly toward a cabin from which a wisp of smoke curled.

A discouraged-looking man stood before the doorway watching her come, and as the girl swung down before the horse was well halted she flashed a quick smile at him.

"I heerd you comin', daughter, away back thar. I shore thought the devil himself might 've been after you!" He smiled wanly.

"I seen her again," the girl said as she dragged her saddle off.

The man pulled languidly at his mustache before he spoke.

"She see you?" he inquired.

"No. I set under a juniper and watched 'em—her an' that Beck man."

"Mebbe if you was to talk to her an' get friendly—".

"I don't want to be no friends with Jane Hunter. I hate her already!" She spat out the words, and her face was a storm of dislike.

"What I meant—mebbe 'twould be easier for us if you played like you was friends. Then she mightn't suspect."

The girl rolled her saddle to its side and spread the blanket over it.

"No. I can't do things thataway, Alf," she said with a slow shake of her head. "Mebbe 'twould get us more, but there's somethin' in me, in here"—a palm to her breast—"that won't let me. I can steal her blind an' only be glad about it, but I couldn't make up like I was her friend while I done it."

"Mebbe you sure-enough would like her," he persisted. "You ain't never had no friends—"

"I'd never like her, not while we're this way"—with a gesture toward the litter about the cabin. "She's got all that I want. She's had all the things I've never had. She's got lots of pretty clothes; she's lived in towns an' has always had things easy. She's got friends and folks to respect her. You can tell that by lookin' at her. What makes me that way, Alf? What makes me hate folks that have got the things I want?"

Alf pulled on his mustache again and scanned the scarlet sky which rose above the purple heights to the westward. He shook his head rather helplessly and then looked at the girl who stood before him, the eagerness of her query showing in her eyes with an intensity that was almost desperate.

"Mebbe you get it from me. I've always had it. That's all I have had—that an' hard luck."

"But I don't like it!" she said, and in her tone was something of the spirit of a bewildered child. "I'd like to be like other girls. I'd like to have friends, girl friends, but the more I want 'em, the more I hate those that have 'em! What's the matter with me, Alf?"

"The same thing that's the matter with me, daughter—hard luck. I've wanted things so bad that not havin' 'em has soured me. I've watched other outfits grow big an' rich, an' nothin' like that has ever come my way. The bigger the rest got, the harder 'twas for me to get along—an' the worse I hated 'em!"

There was no iron in his voice; just the whine of a weakling, dispirited to a point where his resentment even at ill fortune was a passive thing.

"She's got a fine house to live in, an' I'll bet she always had. She's never knowed what it was to set out a norther in a wagon. She's never lived on buckskin an' frozen spuds all winter. She's never been chased from one place to another. Folks respect her for what she's got. Why don't folks get respected for just what they are?"

There was pathos in that query.

"It ain't what you are that matters, daughter," the man replied. "It's what you own."

"You've always said that, ever since I can remember. Mebbe if you hadn't said it so much, Alf, I wouldn't feel like I do."

He shifted his footing uneasily and looked again at the flaring sky.

"Well, it's so," he whined. "You'd have found it out yourself. I've brung you up the best I knowed how."

"Oh, Alf! I didn't mean I was findin' fault! Damned if you *ain't* brought me up good! Why, you're the only friend I got, Alf! What 'd I do without you? You're the only one I've ever knowed real well. You're the only one who's ever been good to me!" She put her hands on his shoulders and looked into his face with a smile of genuine affection. "Good old Alf! We've been pals, ain't we?"

He nodded.

"An' if you stick to me a little mite longer, you'll have enough," he said. "You're brighter 'n I be, daughter. You got a longer head. Now's your chance to use it!" He looked about, somewhat nervously, as if they might be overheard. "Sometimes I get afeared. Lately, since we've come here, I've been afeared. It's the only time I ever let anybody else know what my plans was, an' it makes me feel creepy to think somebody else *knows!*"

"'Fraid of what, Alf?" she asked.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Gettin' caught again, an'—"

"Oh, but you won't! You can't." She spoke in a whisper and gripped her fists for emphasis. "Alf, you can't get caught an' sent to jail an' leave me alone again."

"I shore don't want to leave you, daughter. I shore don't want to get catched. That's where you come in—helpin' me scheme. I ain't afeared of havin' 'em come up on me an' git me red-handed so much as I am of havin' somebody else know what's goin' on."

"But he sent for us. He told us the outfit was goin' to be owned by a tenderfoot. He's as much in danger as we, ain't he?"

Her father nodded slowly.

"You're right, in a way; but if it ever come to a show-down, I'd be the one to hold th' bag, wouldn't I? That's what we got to watch out for. Course, it's easy pickin', with this gal tryin' to run things herself, an' what with her brand workin' over into ourn so easy, there ain't many chances—except havin' somebody else know."

"If anybody ever was to double-cross you, Alf, I'd get 'em, if it was the last thing I ever done!"

Though she was but a slender girl, that threat carried conviction. Her father looked at her with a rare brand of admiration in his eyes.

"Lord, daughter, sometimes I think you was meant to be a man an' a hard man. Sometimes you almost scare me, the way you say things."

She made no reply, and he went on:

"All we got to do is go slow. A brandin'-iron has built many a fortune, an' nobody ever had it any easier 'n us."

"Do you think we'll ever get rich enough, Alf, to have a regular house, an' be respected by folks?"

"Luck's bound to change some time," he muttered. "Ours has been bad a long, long time."

He gathered an arm-load of wood and entered the cabin. The girl stood alone outside, watching the brilliant flowering of the sky sink slowly into the west, drawing steely night to cover its garden. A sharp star

bored its way through the failing light and stood half-way between earth and heaven. A vagrant breeze slid down the creek, bringing with it the breath of sage, and afar off somewhere a cow bawled plaintively.

"She has 'em," she muttered to herself. "Friends an' respect an' everything I want. I wonder what makes me hate folks so!"

VIII

THREE weeks after her arrival Jane made her first trip to town, and Beck drove the pair of strong bays which swirled their buckboard over the road at a spanking trot.

Events had arisen to prevent them being together in the days immediately following the frank discussion of their attitudes toward each other, and Jane thought that she detected a feeling of curiosity in him, as if he wondered just how she would go about forcing him to like her. Shrewdly, she avoided personalities and talked much of the ranch.

When they broke over the divide and began the long drop into town, he said:

"Since you asked advice from me, I keep thinkin' up more, ma'am."

"That's nice. I need it. What now?"

"I s'pose dad mentioned that water in Devil's Hole?"

"Why, I don't recall it. We've talked so much and about so many things that perhaps it's slipped my mind."

"Maybe. He said he had."

She questioned him further, and he said it might be well for her to mention it to Hepburn.

"He's foreman, you know."

They swung into the one street of Ute Crossing and stopped before the bank. As Beck stepped down to tie the horses, a girl came out of a store across the way and vaulted into the saddle on a big brown horse with graceful ease. It was the nester's daughter.

Two men came from the saloon just as she reined her horse about. They eyed her insolently with the typical loafer's stare, eloquent of all that is despicable; and one of them, a short, stodgy man, smiled brazenly.

The girl gave them one stare, hostility in her brown eyes, and then looked away, her lips moving in an unheard word, surely of contempt.

Then the man spoke. It is not well to repeat. His words were few, but they were ugly. The girl had touched her horse with a spur, and he leaped forward—just that one bound. As he made it, the man spoke, and with a wrench she set the brown back on his haunches and whirled him about. Her face was suddenly white, her lips in a tight, red line, and her eyes blazed.

She rode back to the men, who had continued on their way, holding her horse to a mincing trot, for he seemed to have caught the tensity of her mood.

"Did I hear you right?" she said to the man who had spoken.

He stood still and looked up with the rude leer.

"That depends on your ears, likely. All I said was that you—"

She did not give him time to repeat. Her right arm flashed up, and the quirt slung to its wrist hissed angrily as it cut back and with a stinging crack wound its thong about the man's face.

"Take that!" she cried. "And that—and that!"

At the first blow the man ducked and turned, throwing up his hands to guard; and as other slashes, relentless, rapid, of scourging vigor, fell upon his head and face and neck, he doubled over and ran for the shelter of a store. But the girl's wrath was not satisfied. She sent the big horse from street to sidewalk, where his hoofs thundered on the planks, crowded in between her quarry and the building fronts, cutting off his flight, striking faster, harder, her teeth showing now between her drawn lips.

The man fled into the street again, but she followed, guiding her horse without conscious thought, surely, for no woman roused as her face showed she was roused could have had thought for other than the thrashing she was administering. Endangered by the excited hoofs, which were all about him as he vainly ducked and dodged, the man ran with hands and arms close about his head, moving them with each blow that fell, in futile attempts to save other parts from the cut and smart of that rawhide.

The girl uttered no word. All the rancor, all the rage he had roused by his insult, found vent in the whipping. Her whole lithe torso moved with each stroke as she put into the downward swing all the strength she could command. Across the man's cheek rose broad red welts, contrasting with his pallor of fright, until his face looked like a fancy berry pie.

Scuttling, dodging, doubling, the man worked across the street, turning back time

and again. With a cry of pain and desperation, he threw out one hand and caught the girl's bridle. In the instant's respite the move gave him, he stumbled to the other sidewalk, across it, and through the swinging doors of the saloon that he had left a few moments before.

The horse came with a halt with a slam against the flimsy front of the building. The girl drew back her quirt as for a final blow, but the man, regaining his feet, fled through the barroom and disappeared. She dropped her hand to the top of the door, pushed it open, and held it so, peering darkly into the room.

People had come into the street to watch. There had been excited shouts and a scream or two; but as the girl sat looking into the place a quick silence shut down. When she spoke, her voice, trembling with emotion but scarcely raised above its normal pitch, was easily heard.

"I've took a lot from men," she said, "ever since I was a kid. When I come into this country I thought maybe I'd get a little respect for bein' just a girl. I didn't get it; I've got to take it. If that man's a sample of the kind you've got here, you're a nest of skunks! Talk easy hereafter, every one of you, because so long as I've got a quirt and an arm, I'll hide you till you're raw if you make any breaks like he did. Keep that in mind!"

She released her hold on the door; it swung outward smartly, and as it struck the horse he sprang sidewise, wheeled, and, clearing the shallow gutter with a lunge, swung down the street at a gallop.

When the girl passed Jane Hunter, who stood amazed in her buckboard, tears showed in her eyes, but her back was as erect, her shoulders as trimly set as if no great emotion was surging in her heart.

"She's quite a catamount, I'll guess," said Tom Beck as he gave the knot in the tie-rope a securing tug and turned to face Jane. His eyes were fired with admiration.

"But a girl—"

"She was magnificent!"

It was Dick Hilton who had interrupted. Beck looked at him, and the enthusiasm which had been in his face faded. He eyed the Easterner briefly and turned to adjust a buckle on the harness.

"And only a girl!" exclaimed Jane under her breath. "Dick, did you see it all?"

"A typical Western girl, I should say," he replied. "Your neighbor and associate? Your companion, Jane?" he asked. "The sort you want to cast your lot with?"

"A moment ago you thought her magnificent!" she taunted as she stepped down and offered him her hand.

"I'll meet you in, say, two hours, ma'am," Beck said.

"Very well—right here," she replied, and he left her as she turned to meet Hilton's unpleasant smile.

Beck and Jane began the return trip shortly after noon. Hilton had been with Jane when Tom returned, and he stood beside the buckboard talking for some minutes after Beck had picked up the reins and was ready to commence the drive. Occasionally Dick's eyes wandered from Jane to the other man's face, but Tom sat, knees crossed, idly toying with the whip, as indifferent to what was being said as if the others were out of sight and hearing.

Hilton made an obvious effort to exclude the Westerner, but Beck's disregard of him was as genuine as it was evident. He sat patiently, with an easy sense of superiority, and the contrast was not lost on Jane Hunter.

The town was far behind and below them, a mere cluster of miniature buildings, before either spoke. Then it was Jane.

"That girl—there was something splendid about her, wasn't there?"

"There was," he agreed. "She sure expressed her opinion of men in general."

"A newcomer, evidently."

Beck nodded.

"Came in soon after you did, with her father, it looked like."

"And she wins the respect of strange men by blows!"

"He deserved all he got, didn't he?" Beck asked, smiling. "I like to see a bad *hombre* like that get set down by a woman. There's something humiliating about it that counts a lot more than the whippin' she gave him."

"But wouldn't it have spoken more for the chivalry of the country if some man had done it for her?"

"That's likely. But there ain't much chivalry here, ma'am."

"And am I so fortunate as to have enjoyed the protection of what little there is?" He looked at her blankly. "I had to come to Ute Crossing to learn how one man defended me from the insult of another."

He stirred uneasily on the seat.

"That was nothin'," he growled. "I'd been waiting for a chance to land on Webb for a long time."

He did not look at her, and his manner had none of its usual bluntness; clearly he was evasive and, more, uncomfortable.

"First, I want to thank you," Jane said after she had looked at him a moment. "You don't know how a woman such as I am can feel about a thing like that. I think it was the finest thing a man has ever done for me—and many men have tried to do fine things for me."

She was deeply touched, and her voice was not just steady; but when Beck did not answer, and looked straight ahead with his telltale flush deepening, a delight crept into her eyes and the corners of her pretty mouth quirked.

"Besides, it was a great deal to expect of a man who has made up his mind not to like me!"

They had topped the divide, and the sorrels had been fighting the bits. As she spoke, Tom gave them their heads, and the team swept the buckboard forward with a banging and clatter that would have drowned words anyhow; but the fact that he did not reply gave Jane a feeling of jubilation. Her thrust had pricked his reserve, showing it to be not wholly genuine!

She studied his clean-cut profile carefully, as if searching for a secret. She thought that if one strange woman had found chivalry wanting in that country, she herself had not!

Dick Hilton had told her of the encounter Beck had had with Webb—told it jeeringly, as he attempted to impress her with the distasteful phases of her environment. He had failed in that. He had impressed her only with the fact that Tom Beck had gone out of his way, had taken a chance, to protect her standing. Others of her men had heard her insulted, men from other ranches had been there, but of them all Beck had been her champion.

She had believed, before she came into those hills, that she knew men of all sorts, but now she had found something new. Here was a man who, in her presence, would plot to humiliate her, and yet, when she could not see or hear, his loyalty and his belief in her were outstanding.

And what was it, she asked herself, that made her pulse leap and her throat tighten? It was not wholly gratitude. It was not merely because he resisted her efforts to win his open regard. Those things were potent influences, surely, but there was something more fundamental about him, a basic quality which she had not before encountered in men. She could not analyze it, but daily she had sensed its growing strength. Now she felt it—felt, but could not identify.

Two-Bits opened the gate for them, and Tom carried her bundles into the house.

At the corral, as Beck unharnessed, the homely cow-puncher said:

"Gosh, Tommy, how'd it seem, ridin' all the way to town an' back with her settin' up beside you?"

"Just about like you was there, Two-Bits, only we didn't swear quite so much."

"I got lots of respect for you, Tommy, but I think you're a damned liar!"

And Beck chuckled to himself, as if the other had perhaps been right.

"Two weeks now since he wrote," Two-Bits sighed. "He shore ought to be comin'. Gosh, Tom, but he's a bright man!"

Again that night Jane Hunter looked from a window after the lights in the bunkhouse had gone out and the place was quiet, to see a tall, silent figure move slowly beneath the cottonwoods, watching the house, pausing at times, as if listening. Then it went back through the shadows more rapidly, as if satisfied that all was well.

Many times she had watched this, but to-night it seemed of greater significance than ever before. He denied her his friendship; he had made Webb his sworn enemy by defending her—she had not told him that part of the tale she heard in Ute Crossing—and yet he disclaimed any great interest in her as a motive. Still, he patrolled her dooryard at night.

She felt a sudden impulse to do something that would *make* him give her that consideration in her presence which he gave before others. His attitude suddenly angered her beyond reason, and she felt her body shaking as tears sprang into her eyes. The great thing which she desired was just there, just out of reach, and the fact exasperated her, grew, became a fever, until, on her knees at the window, hammering the sill with her fists, she cried:

"Tom Beck, you're going to love me!"

IX

Two-Bits was the last into the bunkhouse the following evening. He had ridden

THE MAN'S WORDS WERE FEW, BUT THEY WERE UGLY. THE GIRL WHIRLED HER HORSE AROUND. HER FACE WAS SUDDENLY WHITE, HER LIPS IN A TIGHT, RED LINE. HER QUIRT—

his black horse in from the westward hills, and had not come through the big gate, so not until he stepped across the threshold were the others aware of his presence.

"Here he is!" said a rider from down the creek, who was stopping for the night, and the group in the center of the low room broke apart.

"Two-Bits, here's your brother," said Curtis.

—HISSED ANGRILY. "TAKE THAT!" SHE CRIED. "AND THAT—AND THAT!"

A small man stood beside him. He wore a green, battered derby hat, the band and binding of which were sadly frayed. He wore spectacles, steel-rimmed, over searching gray eyes. He was unshaven. A celluloid collar, buttoned behind, made an overly large cylinder for his wrinkled neck. He wore a frock coat, also green with age, the pockets of which bulged and sagged, and their torn corners spoke of long overloading. His overalls, patched and newly washed, were tucked into boots with run-down heels. In his hand he held a fountain pen.

At the entrance of Two-Bits all talk had ceased; at Curtis's introduction, Two-Bits stopped. He swallowed, setting his Adam's apple in sharp vibration. He took off his hat. He flushed, and his mild eyes wavered. Then he advanced across the room, extending a limp hand, and said in a thin, embarrassed voice:

"Pleased to meet you, Mr. Beal."

Tom Beck bit his lips, but one or two of the others laughed outright. They ceased, however, when Azariah Beal, in a voice that was tremendously deep and impressive for such a small man, said:

"My brother, I extend to you the right hand of fellowship! It is a deed of God that enables me to look once more into your beloved face after these years of separation. Give me your hand, brother. May the blessings of Heaven descend upon and abide with thee."

He shook Two-Bits's paw, looking up earnestly into his face, while the blushing became more furious.

"Marvelous are the ways of Providence!" he boomed. "Let us give thanks." He doffed his hat, and, still clinging to Two-Bits's hand, lowered his head. "Almighty Father, whose blessings are diverse and manifold, we, brothers of the flesh, give our thanks to Thee for bringing about this reunion on earth. We realize, O Lord, that these mundane moments are but brief forerunners of greater joys that are to come, that they are but passing pleasures, but joy here below is a rare thing, and from this vale of tears and sin we lift our hearts and our voices in thanks that such blessings have been visited upon us by Thy divine magnanimity!"

He lifted his head, and a suggestion of honest tears showed behind his misted spectacles.

"And now, brother"—in a brusk, businesslike manner—"you, too, I know, will be interested in this article which I was about to demonstrate to the congregation assembled here."

He replaced his hat, held the pen aloft

in gesture, drew a pad of paper from one of his sagging pockets, and continued:

"Made of india-rubber, combined in a secret process with Belgian talc and Swedish water-proof shellac, this pen will withstand the acid action of the strongest inks. It is self-filling, durable, compact, artistic in design. The clip prevents its falling from the pocket and consequent loss. The point is of the finest, specially selected, eighteen-carat California gold. It was designed by that peerless inventor, Thomas Edison. It's every feature, from the safety shank to the velvet tip, is covered by patents granted by the authority of this great republic. It does not leak!"—shaking it vigorously. "It does not fail to flow. It does not scratch or prick. Follow me closely, men."

With facility he guided the point across the paper in great flourishes, etching a crudely designed bird on the wing.

"See? See what can be done with this invention? How can any mature man or woman do without this article? *Such* an article! This, men, is a three-dollar commodity, but for the purpose of advertising I am permitted by the firm to charge you—two fifty? No! Two dollars? *No!* One fifty? *No!* For the sum of one dollar, American money, 'E Pluribus Unum' and 'In God We Trust,' I will place this invaluable article in your possession. One dollar, men! *One dollar!* But wait. Further"—diving into another pocket—"we will give away, absolutely free of charge to every purchaser, one of these celebrated key-rings and chains, made of a new conglomerate called white metal, guaranteed not to rust, tarnish, or break except under excessive strain. Keeps your keys safe and always handy. Free, with each and every individual purchase! Still more"—making another dive into the inexhaustible pockets—"another article used by every gentleman and lady. A hand mirror, a magnifying hand mirror. Carry it in your pocket, have it always handy for the thousand and one uses to which it may be put. Think! This magnificent fountain pen, this key-ring and chain, this pocket mirror, a collection which regularly would retail for from four to five dollars, are yours for one dollar. Now, who's first?"

Two-Bits, who had watched and listened with a growing amazement, mouth open, Adam's apple jumping, was roused.

"I am, Mr. Beal," he said eagerly, digging in a pocket for the money.

"Ah, brother, part of being a Beal is knowing a bargain! Who else, now?"

He sold six of the pens before the big bell at the ranch-house summoned the men to supper; then he slipped his stock back in the pockets of that clerical-looking garment, and, grasping Two-Bits by the arm, beaming up into his face, stumped along by his side.

At the table he ate and talked, at one and the same time, doing both with astonishing ease. No matter how great the excess of food in his mouth, he was still able to articulate, and no matter how rapidly he talked, he could always thrust more nourishment between his lips.

"Oh, it warms the heart of a seeker after strays from the herds of the Master to look upon the bright, honest faces of stalwart men!" he cried, brandishing his fork and helping himself to more sirup with the other hand. "Blessed are the pure in heart, it is written, and I know that when in the presence of such men as you, I am among the blessed of the Father! I can see integrity, devotion to duty, uprightness, and honor in all your faces—or, that is, in *most* of your faces. What a contrast"—heedless of the uproar his qualification of a broad statement caused—"what a contrast to the iniquitous ways of those who dwell in the tents of the wicked. Why, brethren, only last night I stood in the hotel in yonder settlement and watched and listened to the cries of a lost soul, a young man sunk hopelessly in sin. He was stranger in a strange land, but he had not yet felt the heavy hand of a slowly roused God, had not yet become the Prodigal. He had tasted of the wine when it was red, and out of his mouth flowed much evil. I spoke to him, asking if he did not desire to seek redemption in the straight and narrow way which leads to the only righteous life.

"'Righteousness, hell!' he shouted at me, his face black with ungodly thoughts. 'That's what I want *less* of—righteousness! That's what's raised hell in me!'

"Oh, it was terrible, brothers! He drank continually, and finally they carried him off to bed, cursing and swearing, cherishing bitterness in his heart, which is against the word of the Almighty. A definite wrong was in his mind, I was led to presume, for he cried again and again:

"'I'll break her if it's the last thing I do! I'll ruin her and bring her back!'

"I tell you, my fellow men, I prayed

fervently for that lost soul through the night. Something heavy is upon him, something tremendous."

"Likely some of that high-pressure booze," remarked one, at which everybody except the cleric and Two-Bits laughed.

"Goin' to stay long?" Oliver asked.

"Alas, I am not my own master. My feet are guided from up yonder. To tarry with my dear brother is my most devout prayer and wish, but we have no promise of the morrow. I may remain in your midst a day, a month. I cannot tell when the call will come."

Tom Beck had watched with a glimmer in his eye until the newcomer told of the scene in the hotel. It was not difficult for him to identify the sin-beset young man as Hilton, and at that he became less attentive to the garrulous talk of the itinerant preacher-pedler. In fact, he gave no heed at all until, returned to the bunk-house, the exhorter made a point of seeking out Dad Hepburn and talking to him in confidence.

Dad's bed was directly across from Tom's, and he could not help hearing.

"I waited to get you alone," Beal said, dropping his elocutionary manner, "because what others don't know won't hurt 'em. Just before I was leaving town, saddling my mare in the corral, I heard two men talking, and it may interest you. This outfit uses the H. C. brand on horses as well as cattle, don't it?"

"That's right."

"Exactly! One of the men said—they didn't know I was near, understand—'So there's eight more H. C. horses gone West.' And the other one said, 'Yes, they was camped at the mouth of Twenty-Mile this mornin'. It's easy. They had the horses in a box-gulch, with a tree down across the mouth, most natural.'

"Have you sold any horses lately?"

Hepburn glanced about cautiously. Just before he turned to reply, his eyes met Beck's gaze, cold and hard this time, flinging an unmistakable challenge at him.

"Not a horse," he mumbled. "They're sneaking out of the country with 'em. Tom, come here"—with a jerk of his head. Beck walked over and sat down. "Did you hear what the Rev. Mr. Beal said about the horses?"

"Yes, I ain't surprised. Are you?" His eyes, again amused, bored into Hepburn's face with the query.

"No, not—"

The sharp batter of running hoofs cut him short. The whole assemblage was listening. The rider stopped short at the gate, they heard it creak, and a moment later he came across toward the bunk-house at a high lope. They heard him speak gruffly to the horse, heard the creak of leather as he swung down, and then jingling spurs marked his further progress toward the door.

It was Henry Riley, owner of the Bar Z Ranch, thirty miles down Coyote Creek—a cattleman of the old order, a man not given to haste or excitement. His appearance caught the interest of all, for he was breathing hard, and his eyes blazed.

"Where's Dad?" he inquired.

"Here," replied Hepburn, rising. "What's the matter, Henry?"

"Who's this nester in Devil's Hole?" Riley asked sharply.

"Why, I didn't know there was a nester there."

Dad answered hesitatingly, and Beck scraped one foot on the floor.

"Well, there is. Guess we've all been asleep. He's there, with a girl, and they filed on that water yesterday. That shuts your outfit and mine out of the best range in the country, if he fences, which he will! If they're goin' to dry-farm our steers off the range, we'd better look alive."

"I'll be damned!" muttered Hepburn. "That was one of the next things I was goin' to have her do, file on that there water."

He scratched his head and turned. Beck was waiting for him to face about.

"Now," Tom said, "what are you going to do?"

His eyes flashed angrily, and any who watched could see the challenge.

Silently Hepburn reached for his belt and gun, strapped them on, dug in his blankets for another revolver, and shoved it into his shirt.

"First," he said, "I'm goin' after those horses. *That* ain't too late to be remedied. No, I'll go alone!" as Tom stepped toward his bunk where his gun hung.

Hepburn gave Beck stare for stare, as if defying him to question his motives, and strode out into a fine rain, drawing on his slicker.

X

WHILE the men were eating that night another rider had come to the H. C. He

entered slowly, tied his horse to the fence, and walked down along the cottonwoods toward the house. He stood outside a time, looking through the window at Jane, whose golden head was bowed in the mellow glow of the student-lamp as she worked at her desk. He stepped lightly across the veranda and rapped; at her bidding he entered.

"Dick!" she exclaimed.

"Undoubtedly," he said, with forced attempt at lightness.

"How did you get here? Why come at this time of day?" she asked, rising and walking toward him.

"I rode a horse, and I came because I couldn't stay away from you any longer."

She looked at him with her head tilted a bit to one side, and genuine regret was in her slow smile.

"Oh, Dick, don't look or feel like that! I'm glad to see you, but I wish you'd stop thinking and talking and looking like that. I don't like to have you so dreadfully determined when it's no use. All this way to see me! And did you eat? Of course you didn't!"

"I don't want anything," he protested glumly.

"But you must."

She seized on his need as a welcome distraction from his love-making, which undoubtedly was his purpose. She took his coat and hat, placed cigarettes for him, and went to the kitchen to help Carlotta prepare a quick meal. She served it herself, going to pains to make it attractive, and finally seated herself across the table from Hilton, who made a pretense of eating.

She talked—a bit feverishly perhaps—but compelled him to stick to matters far from personal; and after he had finished his scant meal and lighted a cigarette he leaned back in his chair and smiled easily at her. It was a good smile, open and frank and gentle, but when it died that nasty light came back; as if the smile showed the man whom Jane Hunter had tolerated for long, masking the man whom she now tried to put from her.

"If your enthusiasm were for anything else, I'd like it," he said.

"But it isn't. Why can't you like it as it is?"

He ignored the question.

"Busy, Jane?"

"As the devil on Forty-Second Street."

"And still think it's worth while?"

"The only worth-while thing I've ever done; more worth while every day. So much worth while that I'm made over, from the heart out, and I've been here less than a month."

"After taking a bottle of your bitters I am now able to support my husband and children," he quoted ironically.

"Laugh if you must"—with a lift of her shoulders—"I mean it."

"You get along with the men, Jane?"

"Very well so far. They're fine, real, honest men. I like them all. There are some things I don't quite understand yet. I haven't made up my mind that my foreman can be trusted, or that he's as honest as he seems to be."

"Your foreman? The fellow who was with you yesterday?"

"No—Dad Hepburn. An older man. He seems to evade me sometimes."

Hilton watched her closely. She was one of the few women he knew who had been able to judge men; he made a mental note of the name she had mentioned.

The talk became desultory, and Dick's eyes clung more closely to Jane's face, their hard, bright light accentuated. It began to rain, and Jane, hearing, looked out.

"Raining! You can't go back to-night. You'll have to stay here. Mr. Hepburn can fix you up with the rest of the men."

He smiled peculiarly at that, for it cut. He made no comment beyond expressing the belief that a wetting, since it was not cold, would do no harm. She knew that he did not mean that, and contrasted his evasion with Beck's quiet candor.

"What's the idea of the locket?" he asked, and Jane looked down at the trinket with which she had been toying. "You never were much addicted to ornaments."

She laughed with an expression which he did not understand.

"Something is in there which is very dear to me," she said. "I don't wear it as an ornament; as a talisman, rather. I'm getting to be quite dependent on it." Her manner was outwardly light, but at bottom was a seriousness which she did not wholly cover.

"Excuse me for intruding on privacies," Dick said bitterly. Then, after a moment: "The picture of some cow-puncher lover, perhaps?"

"No, though that wouldn't be so utterly unreasonable," she replied. "Such things have happened."

"Let's cut this!" he said savagely, break-

"AH, BROTHER, PART OF BEING A BEAL IS KNOWING A BARGAIN. WHO ELSE, NOW?"

ing in on her and sitting forward. "Let's quit these absurd banalities. You know why I came here. You know what's in my mind. There's a job before me that gets bigger every day; the least you can do is to help me."

"In what?"

"Tell me what I must do to make you understand that I love you."

He leaned across the table intently. The girl laughed.

"Prove to me first that two and two make six!"

"Meaning?"

"That it can't be done."

"It's the first time you've ever been so certain."

"The first time I've ever expressed the certainty, perhaps. Things happen, Dick. I progress."

"Do you mean such an impossible thing as that there *is* some one else?"

"Another question which you have no right to ask."

"Jane, look at me! Are you wholly insane?"

"No, but as I look back I think I have been a little off, perhaps."

"But you're putting behind you everything that is of you." His color rose with his voice as her tone of quiet confidence maddened him. "You're breaking off the life that is yours by nature and training. You're going blindly ahead into something

you don't know, among people who are not yours!"

He became suddenly tense, as if the passion which he had repressed until that moment swept through him with a mighty urge. His breath slipped out in a long sigh.

"You are repeatedly mistaken, Dick. I have just found my people."

"*Your* people!" he scoffed.

She nodded.

"'East is East and West is West,' you know, and the two shall never meet. It must be true, and, if so, I have never been of the East. I never felt comfortable there, with the lies and the shams and the hypocrisies that were all about us. Out here, I do. Perhaps that is why you and I—" She shrugged her shoulders again. "You see, Dick, I have cast my lot here. The East is gone, for me; it never can pass for you. I have found my people; they are my people, their gods are my gods. I have a strength, a peace of mind, self-respect, ambitions, and natural, real impulses that I never knew before. I feel that I have come home!"

He laughed dryly, but she went on as if she had not heard.

"You have never understood me; you never can hope to now. There's a gulf between us, Dick, that will never be bridged. I am sorry, in a way. I never can love you, and I hate to see you wasting your time on me. I have thought about you a great deal lately. You are missing all that is fine in life, and because of that I am sorry for you. We used to have one thing in common—the lack of worthy ideals. I have wiped out that lack, and I wish you might; I truly wish that, Dick! And it seems possible to me that you may, just because you are here where realities truly count. There's an incentive in the atmosphere, and I do hope it gets into your blood. What you are doing now is so nonsensical, so foolish. I suppose I am the only thing you have ever wanted that you couldn't get, and that's what stimulates your want. It's not love, Dick."

"How do you know?"

"I have learned things in these weeks," with a wistful smile. "I have learned about men, for one thing. I have found an honesty, an honor, a simple directness, which I have never known before."

He rose and leaned his fists on the table.

"You mean you've found a lover?"

She met his eyes frankly.

"Again I say, you have no right to ask that question. In the second place, I am not yet sure."

His mouth drew down in a leer.

"So, that's it, eh? So you would turn me away for some rough-neck who murders the English language and smells of horses! You'd let a thing like that overwhelm you in a few days when a civilized human has failed after years of trying! I've tried to treat you with respect. I've tried to be gentle and honorable. Now if you don't want that, if you want this he-man sort of wooing, by God you'll get it!"

He kicked his chair back angrily and took a step toward her. A big blue vein which ran down over his forehead stood out in knots.

Jane rose.

"Dick!" she cried, and in the one word was disappointment, anger, appeal, reproach, query.

"Oh, I'm through," he muttered. "I used to think you were a different sort; used to think you were fine and finished. But if you're a woman in the raw, then I'll treat you as such. You've got me, either way; I can't get you out of my mind an hour. I'm through holding myself back. You've driven me mad, and you prove by your own insinuations that the love you want is not the one who will dally with you. You want the primitive, go-get-it kind, the kind that takes and keeps. Well, *mine* can be that kind!"

She backed from him slowly, and he kept on advancing with a menacing assurance, his face contorted with jealousy and hot desire.

"The other day"—stopping a moment—"when I took your hands and felt your body here in this room, I was almost beside myself. You haven't been out of my thoughts an hour since! I tried to kill it with reason and then with drink. I've tried to be patient and wait among the—the cattle in that little town." He continued moving toward her.

"Dick, are you mad?" she challenged, trying to summon her assurance through the fright he had given her. "It's not what you think—it's none of your affair—Dick!"

He grasped her wrists roughly.

"Am I mad?" he repeated, looking down at her, his jaw clenched. "Yes, I'm mad—mad with desire of you—your eyes, your lips, your hair, your very breath drive me

mad, and when I hear you tell me that you've found the flesh that calls to your flesh among these men it drives me wild! I can offer you more than any of them can a thousand times over. Great God, I love you!"

But his snarl was not the snarl of devotion, of affection. It was the lust cry of the destroyer, of him who would possess hungrily, unthinkingly, without sympathy or understanding, even without respect.

He drew her to him roughly, and she struggled, too frightened to cry out, her face white and her lips closed. He imprisoned both her hands in his one, and with the other arm about her body crushed her to him. He lowered his lips toward her face, and she bent backward, crying out feebly; but the touch of her lithe torso, full of pulsing life, tense in the struggle to be free, made his strength greater, swept away his last barrier of caution.

"Dick—stop—" she panted, and managed to free one hand.

She struck him on the mouth, and struck again, blindly. He gave her efforts no notice, but, releasing her hands, crushed her to him with both arms, and she could feel the quick come and go of his breath through her hair as he buried his face in it.

At that she became possessed of fresh strength. She turned and half-slipped, half-fought her way through his clutch, running down the room to the fireplace, where she stood with the davenport between them, breathing irregularly, a hand clenched at her breast.

"You—you beast!" she said in a low, unsteady voice as he came toward her again.

"Yes, beast!" he echoed. "We're all beasts, every one of us who sees and feels, and I've seen you and I've felt you, and the beast is hungry!"

"And you call that love!" She spoke rapidly, breathlessly. "An hour ago, if any one would have said that Dick Hilton, sober, would have displayed this, this *thing* which is his true self, I'd have come to your defense! But now—you—you!"

Her face was flaming, her voice shook with outraged pride.

"Stop!" she cried, drawing herself up, no longer afraid, but commanding and impressive. Hilton hesitated, putting one hand to a chair-back and eying her calculatingly. The vein on his forehead still stood out like an uneven seam.

"For shame!" she cried again. "Shame on you, Dick Hilton, and shame on me for having tolerated, for having believed in you—little as I did! Oh, I loathe it all, you and myself that was, because if it had not been for that other self which tolerated you, which gave you the opening, this insult would never have been. You, who, failing to buy a woman's love, would take it by strength! You would do this, and talk of your desire as love. You, who scoff at men whose respect for women is as real as the lives they lead! You—you beast!"

"Yes, beast!" he repeated again. "Like all these other beasts, these others who are blinding you as you say I have blinded you, who have—"

"Stop!" she demanded again. "There is nothing more to be said—ever. We understand each other now, and there is but one thing left for you to do."

"And that?"

"Go!"

He laughed bitterly and ran a hand over his sleek hair.

"If I go, you go with me," he said evenly.

"Leave this house at once!" the girl commanded.

Instead of obeying, he moved toward her again, menacingly, a disgusting smile on his lips. He passed the end of the davenport, and she, in turn, retreated to the far side.

"When I go, two of—"

"I take it that you heard what was said to you, sir."

At the sound of the intruding voice Hilton wheeled sharply. He faced Tom Beck, who stood in the doorway, framed against the black night, his arms limp and hanging rather awkwardly at his sides, his eyes dangerously luminous; still, playing across them was that half-amused look, as if this were not in reality a very serious matter after all.

For an interval there was no sound except Hilton's breathing—a sort of hoarse gasp. The two men eyed each other, and Jane, supporting her suddenly weakened limbs by a hand on the table, looked from one to the other.

"What the devil are you doing here?" Dick asked heavily.

"Just standin' quiet, waiting to open the gate for you when you ride out."

The Easterner braced his shoulders backward and sniffed.

"And if I don't choose to ride out, what will you do then?"

Beck looked at Jane slowly, and his eyes danced.

"It ain't necessary to talk about things that won't happen. You're going to go."

"Who are you to be so certain?"

"My name's Beck, sir. I'm just workin' here."

"And playing the rôle of a protector?"

"Well, nothing much ever comes up that I don't *try* to do."

Hilton made as if to speak again, but checked himself, walked down the room in long strides, seized his coat, thrust his arms into the sleeves viciously, and stood buttoning the garment. Beck looked away into the night as if nothing within interested him, while Jane stood clutching the locket at her throat, caressing it with her slim, nervous fingers.

"Under the circumstances, making my farewells must be to the point," Hilton said. He spoke sharply, belligerently. "I have just this to say—I am not through."

"Oh, go!" moaned Jane, dropping into a chair and covering her face with her hands.

She heard the men leave the veranda, heard a gruff, low word from Hilton, and knew that he went on alone. After the outer gate had closed she heard Tom walk slowly up the path toward the bunk-house. He had left her without comment, without any attempt at an expression of concern or sympathy. She knew it was no oversight, but only a delicacy which would not have come from many men she knew.

Her loathing was gone, her anger dead; the near past was a numb memory, and she looked up and about the room as if it were a strange place. There, within those walls, she had experienced a rebirth, she had felt ambition to stand alone come into full being, she had shaken off the fetters with which the past had sought to hamper her.

And now she was free, wholly free. The tentacle that had reached out to draw her back had been cast away. To-night's renunciation had burned the last bridge to that which had been; Dick Hilton, she believed, would never again be an active influence in her life.

She did not know the intensity of a man's jealousy when fate has tricked him of his most valued prize. To-night Hilton was gone, and she was even strong enough to rise above loathing, and to pity him for the failure he was. Just one fact of him remained. Again she heard his ominous prediction, pronounced on his first visit there: "You cannot stand alone! You will fail! You will come back to me!"

She knew, now, that she would never return to him; but there were other possibilities no less disastrous. Could she meet this new life and conquer it? Could she make a place for herself? Was her faith in herself strong enough to outride the defeat which very possibly confronted her?

She did not know.

Outside the rain drummed, and the cottonwoods, now in full leaf, sighed as the wind bowed their water-weighted branches. She went to the window and looked out, searching the darkness for movement. There was none, but he was not far away, she knew.

Her fingers again sought the locket, and she lifted it quickly, holding it pressed tightly against her mouth.

"It's all there," she breathed, "locked up in a little gold disk!"

XI

If Dick Hilton had not been bewildered by passion, jealousy, and the rage of thwarted desire, he might have known that his horse was not taking the homeward way; and had the horse not been bred and raised by one of Colonel Hunter's mares he might have carried his rider straight back to Ute Crossing.

But he was a canny little beast, he was cold and drenched, the trip to town was long, and the range on which he had spent his happy colthood was not far off. Horses know riders before riders know horses, so as he went through the gate he slyly tried out this rider, and instead of swinging to the right he bore to the left. He went cautiously through the pitch darkness, one ear cocked backward at first; but when Hilton, collar up, hat down, bowed before the storm, gave no evidence of detecting the horse's plan, the beast picked up his rapid walk and took the trail for the nearer, more satisfactory place, where many times in the past he had stood out such downpours with no great discomfort under the shelter of a spreading cedar.

Direction was the last thing in Dick Hilton's mind. For a long interval his thoughts were incoherent, and the conflicting emotions they provoked were distressing. Being alone, made physically uncomfortable

by the water seeping through his shoulders and breeches, sensing the steady movement of the animal under him, brought some order to his mental chaos, and finally realization began to dawn.

Yes, he had followed his strongest impulses. There could be no question about what he had done, but as for its wisdom—ah, that was another matter. He cursed himself for a fool, at first mentally, then under his breath; and when the horse began mounting a steep incline, clattering over rocks with his unshod hoofs, Hilton halted the animal, looked about in a foolish attempt to make out his whereabouts, and said aloud:

"Off the road. That's twice you've made an ass of yourself to-night!"

There was nothing for him to do but go on and trust to the horse. He knew that this was not the highway, but consoled himself that it might be a short cut to the crossing. Small consolation, and it was dissipated when they commenced a lurching descent with a wall of rock uncomfortably close to his right — so close that at times his knee scrubbed it smartly. He became alarmed, for the horse went cautiously, head low, feeling his way over insecure footing. Once his fore feet slipped, and he stopped short, while loosened stones rolled before them on the trail. Hilton heard one fragment strike far below to his left, then strike again and again, the sounds growing fainter.

He peered down into the gloom, but could see nothing, hear nothing but the hiss of rain. An empty ache came into his viscera as he imagined the hideous depths that might wait to that side.

After a moment the horse went on, picking his way gingerly along the rough trail.

Somewhere beyond or below Hilton made out a light. It was a feeble glow, and its location became a weird

"YES, I'M MAD—MAD WITH DESIRE OF YOU — YOUR EYES, YOUR LIPS, YOUR HAIR, YOUR VERY BREATH DRIVE ME MAD!"

thing for lack of perspective, but it cheered him. The night was unusually warm for the mountains, but he was decidedly uncomfortable, and his state of mind added to the physical need of warmth and shelter, so he urged the horse on.

Finally they reached a flat, and he felt wet brush slapping at his legs as the horse, intent on the light, trotted forward.

Their destination was a cabin. The glow finally resolved itself into cracks of light showing between logs and through a tarpaulin which hung across the doorway.

Dick shouted. Movement inside; the curtain was drawn back, and he rode blinking into the light, which he could see came from a fireplace. A woman stood outlined against the flare.

"Who's there?" she asked sharply, and Dick stopped his horse.

"My name is Hilton," he said, "but that won't do you much good. I'm a stranger, and I'm off my way, I guess."

The other did not reply as he dismounted and walked toward her.

"Without a slicker, too," she said. "You'd better come in."

The first thing he saw inside was a cartridge-belt, swinging from a nail. A rifle leaned against the door-casing handily.

The girl who had held the curtain back for him to enter let it drop and turned to face him. Hilton drew his breath sharply. Blue-black hair, in a heavy, orderly mass atop a shapely, high-held head, and falling down her straight trim back in one thick plait; brown eyes, ripe red lips, a delicate chin, and a throat of exquisite proportions. His gaze traveled down her figure, the natural grace of which could not be concealed by the shirt and riding-skirt she wore. She was wholly beautiful.

"I've seen you before," he said slowly. "You're the girl that demanded respect and got it in the Crossing the other day."

She eyed him in silence a moment, evidently unaware of the admiration in his tone.

"I never saw you. I ain't been here long," she said, her expression still defiant, as if he had challenged her. She searched his face and his clothing. "Where was you travelin' to-night?"

"I was going to the Crossing," he said with a short laugh. "My horse brought me here."

Without comment she walked to the fire and threw on another knot. He watched her movements, the free, rhythmic swing of her walk, the easy grace with which her hands and arms moved, the perfect assurance in even her smallest gesture. His eyes kindled.

"Set," she said, indicating a box by the hearth. "You're soaked. Lucky you struck here, or you'd have made a night of it."

Hilton seated himself, holding his hands toward the fire. He looked about the one room of the cabin. In two corners were beds on the earthen floor. A table made from a packing-box contained dishes. Dutch ovens and a frying-pan were on the hearth. The roof leaked.

The girl sat eying the fire rather sullenly. He watched the play of light over her throat as it threw a velvety sheen on the wind-kissed skin. Her shirt was open at the neck, and he could see the easy rise and fall of her breast as she breathed. He noticed that her fingers were slender, and that her wrists, bronzed by exposure, indicated, with all their delicacy, wiry strength. Another thing—she was clean.

Suddenly the girl looked up.

"Think you'd know me again?" she said bruskly, and rather swaggered as she moved.

"I don't think I shall ever forget you," he replied. "I knew I should not, the first time I saw you. I shall never forget the way you gave that fellow what he deserved. It was great!"

His manner was kindly, showing no resentment at her belligerence, and though her only reply was a sniff, he knew that what he had said pleased her.

"I wouldn't want you to think I'm staring at you," he went on. "A man shouldn't be blamed for looking at you closely."

"How's that?"

"You are very beautiful."

She poked at the fire with a stick.

"I reckon that 'll be enough of that," she said as she walked back toward the door.

The man smiled and followed her with his eyes, which squinted speculatively.

"You'd better unsaddle that horse," she said.

Hilton looked about the room again.

"Are you alone?" he asked.

She whirled and looked at him with temper. Her hand, perhaps unconsciously, was pressed against the wall near that rifle.

"What if I am?" she returned sharply.

"Because, if you are, I shall not unsaddle my horse. I'll have to go on."

When she put her question she had been rigidly expectant, but at his answer she relaxed, and the fierceness that had been about her yielded to a curiosity.

"Go on in the rain? How's that?"—in a voice that was quite different, as if she had encountered something she did not understand.

He looked at her a lengthy interval before replying.

"Because I respect you very much. Do you understand that?"

She moved back to the fireplace, eying him questioningly, and he met that look with an easy smile.

"No, I don't understand that," she said.

"You should. I saw you beat a man the other day because he didn't respect you. No one but that type of man would refuse to respect you. It's wise, perhaps, for you to take down that rifle when strangers come at night; but it isn't always necessary. Some men might stay here with you alone, but I couldn't."

"Well, you ain't afraid of the gun, are you?"

He laughed outright.

"No, it's not that. It's because I'd ride any distance rather than do something that might bring you unhappiness. Don't you see?" He leaned forward, elbows on knees, looking up into her serious face. "Don't you see that if I stayed here with you, alone, and people heard about it, they might not respect you?"

"It's none of their business!"

"Neither was it any business of that man to insult you in town the other day. But he did."

"But it's rainin', and you're cold. I ain't afraid of you."

It was raining, but he was not cold. The fire was close, and another warmth was seeping through his body as he looked earnestly into the face of that daughter of the mountains.

"And you are a young girl who deserves the admiration of every man that walks. If I stayed here with you, you would know it's all right, and so would I, but others might not understand."

She sat down abruptly, leaned back, clasped one knee with her hands, and smiled for the first time. It was a beautiful smile, in contrast to her earlier sullen defiance.

"I like you," she said simply, and Hilton's face grew hot.

"If you like me, my night's ride hasn't gone to waste," he replied, and laughed.

She looked him over again, calculatingly, as closely as she had at first, but with a different interest.

"You're the first man that's ever talked thataway to me. I've been travelin' ever since I can remember, first one place, then another. I've always had to look out for men—an' I've been able to, too, since I got big enough to be bothered. This is the first time any man's talked like you're talkin' to me."

"Bless you," he said very gently, "that's been tough luck. A girl like you doesn't deserve that."

"Don't she? Well, it ain't what you deserve that counts, it's what you've got."

"What's your name?"

"Bobby—Bobby Cole."

"How old are you?"

She shook her head.

"I don't know — just. About twenty. Alf knows; I ain't thought to ask him for quite a while."

"Who's Alf?"

"My father."

"And your mother?"

"I never had none, that I recall. She died early; that was back in Oklahoma, Alf says."

"No brothers or sisters?"

A shake of the head.

"And since then you've been alone with your father?"

She nodded.

"For weeks an' months without talkin' to another soul."

"Have you always lived so far away as that? Always in such remote places that you didn't even see people?"

"Huh! Usually I've seen 'em, 'most every day; but there's a difference between seein' folks and talkin' to 'em."

He was puzzled, and said so.

"Funny!" she repeated after him. "Maybe it's funny, but I can't see it thataway."

"But surely you've made friends? A girl like you couldn't help make friends."

"I've never had a friend in my life but Alf," she answered bitterly.

"Then it must have been because you didn't want to make friends with people."

"Didn't want to!" she echoed almost angrily. "What else does anybody want

"NO MAN COULD DO LESS FOR A GIRL LIKE YOU." HE BOWED LOW, AND—

but friends, an' things like that? Oh, I wanted to, all right, but folks don't make friends with—with trash like we are. We ain't got enough to have friends, ain't got enough even to have peace."

Hilton studied her face carefully. It was wistful and yet full of virulence.

"They won't even let you have peace?" he asked deliberately, to urge her in further revelation.

"Folks that have things don't want other folks to have 'em. In this country, when poor folks try to get ahead, all they get is trouble."

—WHEN HE LIFTED HIS EYES AGAIN HE SAW THAT HE HAD TOUCHED HER GREATEST DESIRE—HER WISH TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT

"Is that always so?"

"It's always been so with us. Big cattle outfits have drove us out time after time. They're always sayin' Alf steals; they're always makin' us trouble. I hate 'em. I could get along, all right. I can fight, but Alf can't. He's had so much bad luck that it's took the heart out of him. If it wasn't for me he couldn't get along at all. He's discouraged."

"You must think a lot of your father."

"Think a lot of him? God, yes! He's all I got. He's all I ever had. He's the only one that hasn't chased me out—or

chased after me. We've been on the move ever since I can recollect, stayin' a few months or a year or two, then hittin' the trail again. Move, move, move!"

"How did you happen to come here?" he asked.

She looked at him, and a flicker, as of suspicion, crossed her face.

"Just come," she replied—rather evasively, he thought.

For a time they did not speak. The fire crackled dully. Steam rose in wisps from Hilton's soaked clothing, and a look of cunning crept into his expression. The rain pattered on the roof and dripped through in several places, forming dark spots on the hard floor; the horse stamped in the mud outside.

Her lips were parted—such lips! He told himself that she was more beautiful than he had first thought, and as filled with contrasts as the heavens themselves. Shortly before she had been defiant, ready for trouble, prepared to defend herself with a rifle, if necessary; now she was a child—that, and no more.

"You better stay here for the night," she said rather shyly after a time. "Alf 'll be back some time before mornin'. Nobody 'll know."

He shook his head.

"You and I would know, and after I've told you what I think about it, maybe you wouldn't like me if I did stay. You've said you did like me."

He rose smiling.

"Sure enough goin'?"

"Sure enough going."

"But you're soaked and cold."

"No man could do less for a girl like you."

He bowed playfully low, and when he lifted his eyes to her again they read her simple pleasure. He had touched her greatest desire—the wish to be treated by men with respect.

"I'll just ask you to show me the way."

"You come by the way, I guess. Just start back that trail, and your cayuse 'll take you to the road. But Alf 'll be back. We've never turned anybody out in the rain before."

"Then this is something new. Don't ask me again, please. When you ask a man, it makes it very hard to refuse, and I must for your sake. After I strike the road, then what?"

"Follow right past the H. C. Ranch to town. You know where that is?"

A wave of rage swept through him.

"I ought to!" he said bitterly. "I was sent away from there to-night."

"Sent away? In the *rain?*"

"In the rain."

"Why did they do that?"

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Because there are things which some people do not value as highly as you do—generosity, kindliness, hospitality."

He licked his lips almost greedily as he watched her.

"Did *she* know?"

"Who do you mean?"

"That greenhorn gal."

"Yes, she knew," he answered grimly, and buttoned his coat. He put out his hand, and she took it, rather awed. "Some time I may come back and thank you for what you've wanted to do."

"Oh, you'll come back?"

"Do you want me to?"

"Yes"—eagerly.

"Then it is impossible for me to stay away for long!"

She stood watching as, touching his hat, he rode into the night. She let the curtain drop and returned to the fire, where she stood a moment. Then she sat down, rather weakly, and stretched her slender legs across the hearth. "I'll be damned!" she said, rather reverently.

Hilton did not ride far. His horse stopped and stood with head in the air, nickering softly, and would not go on when his rider spurred him. After a moment Hilton sat still and listened. He heard the steady *plunk-plunk-plunk* of a trotting horse, and soon the swish of brush; then a call, rather low and cautious.

The canvas before the doorway was drawn back.

"You decided to stay?" Then, in surprise: "Who's there?"

One word in answer, and Hilton remembered it:

"Hepburn."

The rider dismounted and entered.

Dick rode on up the trail. When he reached Ute Crossing, his clothing was dried by the early sun. He ate breakfast and crawled into his bed, angered one moment, puzzled the next, and finally thrilled as he dropped asleep with a vision of firelight playing over a deliciously slender throat.

(*To be continued in the December number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

Chickens Come Home

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by George E. Wolfe

MARTIE DEANE, punctuating her remarks with quick dabs of the little feather duster, was expounding her philosophy of life. Sarpedon Tait, his black hair slicked back so tightly that it gave him the appearance of really having a forehead, listened rather indifferently while he walked idly about the dunnage-shop, examining the squat Buddha images, ostrich-eggs, boomerangs, bits of coral, and the shin-bone of a defunct missionary.

"It's best to trust folks," asserted Martie, waving the duster at Mr. Tait's pinch-back coat. "You match cunning with folks, and that makes it kind of a game, so to speak, and then it's half-way all right if you do lose. Trust folks. It brings out the best that's in them. O' course, some folks's best hain't much. Some will cheat now and then. But in the long voyage, as dad used to say, it pays. That wasn't always dad's system, though. It wasn't his system 'till he'd quit the sea and started this shop. Fact! Dad discovered the system too late, after Den, my brother, went away. Den was just fifteen years old, five years older than me. It's a long time ago. Den's been gone fifteen years."

Martie, her lips half parted, stood staring across the shop. The gray-green eyes of Sarpedon Tait went ranging over Martie's head, followed along a shelf packed with a miscellany of knickknacks from the seven seas, and came to rest upon the old-fashioned iron safe standing in a dark corner behind the counter.

"It pays to be good to folks, to trust folks," said Martie softly, "because chickens come home to roost. Every time they do. That's so true I wonder if it ain't in the Bible."

Mr. Tait wasn't sure. He admired the sentiment, agreed with it, but was unaware whether it emanated from the Bible or one of the poets.

Martie's brown eyes kindled. She clapped her hand to the back of her head and withdrew from the strands of her thick brown hair two bodkins, the knobs set with green jade of a fine quality.

"This ain't a chicken," said Martie, holding one of the bodkins up to view, "but it just goes to prove. It's two years ago that a seafaring party they call Bilge, that sailed with my dad years ago, came into the shop here and asks me will I lend him the loan of ten dollars. Sure I loaned it to him. That's two years ago. This morning Bilge comes in. He'd just made it from China way on a tramp that's to load lumber here in Seattle for the South Seas. Bilge comes into the shop laughing loud, like he's carrying a full head of steam. He planks down the ten dollars, and then he gives me these Chiny hair-stickers. They're jade—real jade, real gold. Bilge laughs some more, swears he stole these bodkins off the empress dowager while he was dancing with her in a Shanghai bund, and fetched 'em home to me for a present."

The brown eyes of the little mistress of the dunnage-shop glistened brightly.

"Bilge never stole 'em. He bought 'em —as a present—for me. It ain't the value of 'em that makes me think a lot of 'em, but 'cause they're just some more chickens that's come home."

The street door opened to admit two old men. The first, who walked lame, had an enormous bumpy nose, which, as if it were not sufficiently conspicuous already, was set off, as in parentheses, by two chasmlike wrinkles.

Glaring abstractedly into space, scraping one foot after him, this old fellow made for the corner of the storeroom, seated himself at a small desk, laid hold of a pen as if it were a belaying-pin, and began to spatter ink at a tremendous rate. Presently, but

without having uttered a word, he rose and scraped his lame foot after him to the door.

The second old man, as round and cherubic as the former was angular and severe, had the look of one who had just suffered some shocking surprise. His blue eyes stared forth in wonderment, not to say fear. He went behind the counter, peered apprehensively beneath, as if he rather anticipated rousting out a ghost or something, gathered up a serving-tray and some empty dishes, then departed for down the street.

Martie gazed after the two old men with a fond smile.

"Former seafaring parties, both of 'em," she remarked. "Used to sail with my dad. Both all stove up now. No good before the mast. Couldn't get 'em into the tops with a flying-machine; so they work for the dunnage-shop now, or kind of think they do. Bennie—him with the nose—he kind of looks after the marine-intelligence department. We hire hands here for ships that need crews. Gaff—him that's fat and stary—he sweeps, runs errands, or crawls 'em, I should say, and can sing any sailor song ever wrote. Quite a few of his songs I never let him sing to me but once, and then maybe just part of a verse. Yes, Bennie and Gaff sailed with my dad. They're on the pay-roll of the dunnage-shop, and always will be till this old shebang, for the last, half-masts her colors from the mizzentop."

Mr. Tait, now and then fitting the pinch-back coat a bit more snugly by a pull on the lapels, still walked about the floor. His gray-green eyes ranged over the show-cases and shelves, but always their hunting gleam, like the ray of a search-light, shifted back to the old iron safe behind the counter.

II.

Martie smiled indulgently at Mr. Tait's scrutiny of the place. Eastern tourists, especially from the prairie States, always so stared and wondered when they entered the dunnage-shop. Mr. Tait had said that he was from Kansas City. Kansas City is "East" on the Pacific Coast. Mr. Tait had intimated that he was a personage of wealth and non-employment.

"I suppose," he said, stabbing with his thumb at a show-case filled with full-rigged ships in bottles, sea-shells, Chinese incense-burners, and little leaden bottles of attar of rose—"I suppose, now and then, buying all this junk off these steamboat folks, you do pick up something with real class to it, worth money?"

Tait's search-light eyes passed over Martie's head and settled on the old iron safe.

"Yes, once in a great while," replied the girl; "but not often."

For just a moment she paused indecisively. Then she turned to the safe, turned the grinding combination, swung open the creaking door. From an inner compartment she brought forth a small bamboo box with a sliding panel top.

Tait's heavy eyelids, strikingly incongruous in a countenance so thin and pale, lowered to hide the exultant gleam in the gray-green eyes.

"I don't show this very often," Martie explained. "There's several reasons, mainly because it ain't for sale—that is, not now it ain't for sale."

She slid back the panel top of the box, reached within with thumb and forefinger, and lifted a tiny object resting upon a bed of snow-white cotton. She held the thing up and turned it this way and that against the light. In one light it was lifeless and drab; in another, suffused with warmth and rosy color.

It was a pearl, a genuine pearl, but a freak; the artistry of the mysterious depths had formed it into an image of the Virgin, an image almost perfect.

Tait's hand, slender, prehensile, shot forward; but Martie, by accident or design, had dropped the jewel back into the box, had closed the lid. She placed the box in the safe compartment, closed the door, and gave the combination a twist.

"It's a pearl, pure pearl," she said, turning from the safe and leaning her arms upon the edge of the show-case. "It's got sort of a story. A Mexican found it in an oyster-shell near La Paz, in Lower California, thirty years ago. The peons down there, devout Catholics, thought it was a sign from God. The lucky finder traded it for a hundred plain pearls. It was bartered about, stolen, traded some more. Honestly or not, it came into the hands of Pedro Viejo, a sailorman. One voyage, and one only, Viejo was a bosun on my dad's old clipper.

"Dad quit the sea and started this shop, outfitting sailors at first with the dunnage for their ditty-bags. It's maybe about a year when in comes Viejo. He offers the

"I HANDS THE PEARL OVER WITH ONE HAND, WHILE I SETTLES THE OTHER DOWN ONTO THE LITTLE OLD SIEGE-GUN HERE"

Virgin for sale to dad. Dad didn't know what it was worth. Nobody did. There was no forty-story buildings in Seattle in them days. Anyway, dad gives Viejo fifty dollars for it. A year or so later in comes Viejo again, half drunk and ugly, and says dad's robbed him. Dad gives him another hundred, then fifty. Every few months back comes Viejo, turns the steam into his siren, and screams how dad done him up on the pearl. Every time dad gives him some more money. Even after dad finds out the pearl is worth two thousand dollars, and tabs up and sees he's already paid Viejo that much, he gives him an extra fifty; and I've paid him a hundred on top of that since dad died. But there's a limit. Two weeks ago in warps Viejo, and starts his trumpet. 'Not a sou more,' I says, 'and nary a ducatoon!'"

Martie turned and gave the combination-knob of the old safe an absent-minded twist.

"Viejo had been paid—in full. Besides, I didn't like the expression of his bullet head. He looked ugly and talked uglier. About two years ago he gives me a real scare. In he comes, and there's a Chinaman with him that don't look no more human than a breakfast mackerel.

"Viejo asks to see the pearl. I hands it over with one hand, while I settles the other down onto the little old siege-gun here under the counter that was my dad's.

"Faw! That pearl felt actually greasy after that Chink had handled it. I washes it off in clean water, dries it on a soft cloth, lays it in its nest; and I've never let the pearl go into another human hand since, or a Chinaman's, either. It's just as well."

The story of the pearl Madonna seemed to be f no great interest to Mr. Sarpedon Tait. He stood leaning against the show-case during the course of the narrative, staring down at the shin-bone of the defunct missionary where it lay in impious juxtaposition beside a heathen merman. For some moments after Martie had done, he continued to stare. Then all at once he roused, directed a fleeting, predacious glance at the iron safe, looked into the show-case and said he wished to buy "that."

That proved to be the merman, a hideous little manikin with yellow, needle-like teeth protruding from the mummified jaws.

"That's genuine," said Martie, laughing, "that merman is. I bought it off a Lascar sailor who won it playing toss with the Chinaman that made it."

Mr. Tait paid over the price, pocketed his purchase, and turned toward the door.

"Come again," said Martie cordially. "You don't have to buy anything. Come in and visit like whenever you want to. Good-by."

She gave him a bright little nod, then made herself very busy rearranging some of the wares in the show-case. As the door opened and Mr. Tait passed into the street, Martie looked after him and gently sighed. He was a fine figure of a young fellow, she thought. She liked him. She hoped he would come again. He was so different from the tough-handed, loud-voiced sailor folk. She hoped that he would come again and she sort of felt that he would.

III

Sarpedon Tait, purposeful direction in his swift walk, made down the water-front. Where the row of warehouses ceased, and the high masts of the full-riggers and the funnels of the liners gave way to a berthing of lesser craft—halibuters, purse-seiners, gill-netters—Tait turned toward the water and climbed down a ladder leading to a platform built below the wharf planks, and just above high-tide mark. Here was a tiny cubby of a shack, built from odds and ends of driftwood, its floor occasionally awash in the slap of turbid seas.

Seated beside a table which had been fashioned from a packing-box were two men—one dark and sinister, the other a Chinese with a face like a joss. The dark man, slender, almost delicate in stature, had a surprisingly deep, rumbling voice. When he spoke, frequently interrupted by the excited shrillings of the Chinaman, it was like the tuning up of a double-bass and a piccolo, both rather indifferently played.

Ye Jin sat in a corner upon an upturned China rice-wine vat. His little beady eyes, glittering wickedly, gave him something the appearance of a cornered rat. A cornered rat will fight.

Sarpedon Tait stood coldly surveying the disputants. Mr. Tait gave a pull at the lapels of the pinch-back coat, hauled out a box, and seated himself.

"What's the jam?" he demanded.

The dark man aimed a finger, pistol fashion, at the Chinese.

"But for Ye bungling," said the swart person accusingly, "we'd made it big in Mexico."

"All time too many lie," squeaked the Oriental. "He clack um plurl. Ye Jin no clack um."

"Say," said Mr. Tait fretfully, "what's the dif now who cracked the pearl? No wonder you two birds zammed the job. They hain't no class to you. What you birds needed was a manager with a bean."

Mr. Tait drummed his knee with impatient fingers.

"You birds started out like you was half-way smart. Then you falls down and zams it. You two goes into the dunnage-shop and you gets a look at the pearl. In fact, you gets to handle it for a second, long enough for Ye Jin to take a little wax impression of it. That wasn't half-bad work for a couple of jazbos. Then Ye sends some little lead castings made from the wax mold back to China, where they do all kinds of phonying very neat, and them relatives of Ye's takes and sticks them lead images into oyster-shells, where the oysters takes and coats 'em over very neat with a thin shell of pearl. Very good so far, for a couple of jazbos. Then, quite a while after, when them oysters have done their work, you two jazbos beat it for Lower California with a dozen of them phony Virgins, down into the country where the original Virgin pearl was found and sold for big money.

"Then you two zams the job. You take and pretend you find a Virgin pearl and you sell it to a peon, and the pearl coating comes off'n the Virgin, and that peon, mad like a tiger, he comes at Viejo and lams a cheese-knife into him. You two have to beat it out of Mexico, all because your work didn't have no class, and because you needed a manager with a bean. Now you got one. But lay off'n that jangling, or you won't have. I won't stand for it—get that?"

Messrs. Viejo and Jin, at this stern rebuff, both looked very humble and contrite. Ye Jin reached to the rafter above his head, took down a brass pipe with a small bowl, filled the bowl with a fifty-fifty mixture of fine tobacco and smoking opium. Jin took three soul-satisfying puffs, laid down the pipe, and bestowed upon Viejo a look both amiable and brotherly.

"I was just saying," explained Viejo, endeavoring to pianissimo the bassoon voice—"I was just saying, before me and Ye got to wording it, that it's easy to get the original pearl. Why, that time Ye here made the wax cast, I come within one of jumping out with it, and making a run for it. I—"

"So!" interrupted Tait. "So! Say, Viejo, if you had, you and Ye wouldn't 'a' had to hunt up no lead for your molds. No! All you'd had to do was just go to a doctor."

Viejo stared incomprehensively.

"Well," he argued, "we just got to have that original pearl to work this new game. I've thought it out, and here's how we'll get it. Just before noon the girl is alone in the shop, the two old bilge-washes being gone. All we got to do is slip in, fetch the girl a crack over the head, kick in that tin canister of a safe, grab the pearl, and warp out. We might wear masks. Anyway, if the girl did know me, I'll be laying low for a long time here in the shack, playing the stove-up, sick sailor."

Mr. Tait began to wag his head with a slow, mechanical-doll motion.

"That's the bright idea! Very neat—not! That little jane keeps the old Pete locked, the combination turned. And you must think that Pete is a cigarette-box or something. I'm about half smart, Viejo, and in a professional way I've saw them old-line Pete boxes before. This Pete is a three-layer with 'bestos lining. You'd kick it in just like you'd kick the corner-stone out from under the Smith Building. Anyway, what you birds got a manager for? Why'd you send for me? Who's to do the planning, I or you, Viejo?"

Ye Jin began to sputter, but Tait silenced him with a haughty wave.

The Chinese, who had become acquainted with Tait in a certain alley resort where Pen Yen smoking opium might be had, was inclined to resume the quarrel with Viejo. Jin proceeded to enumerate Mr. Tait's qualifications. Mr. Tait had shortly arrived from Jefferson City, Missouri. Mr. Tait was known to the profession, and to not a few police, as a dip of distinction, a pickpocket of parts and perspicuity, the man with the vacuum-cleaner touch and the hollow arm. Mr. Tait had listened to the story of the Virgin pearl, had instantly evolved a working plan, and by Ye Jin had been led to the water-front shack for further conference.

At that first epochal meeting, as Ye reminded Viejo with some acerbity, Mr. Tait had outlined a campaign in the rough. They would get possession of the original pearl image. Ye Jin still had in his keeping half a dozen of the replicas of the original pearl, these latter being the collaborated work of members of the Jin family and of certain selected pearl-oysters of Hoochou.

Mr. Tait, having what was known as a "front," would mingle with promising tourist guests in Seattle's better hotels. Mr. Tait would spot a live one, lead the conversation to a sympathetic reference to a deep-sea sailor stricken unto death, lingering on to a miserable end in a water-front hovel. The deep-sea sailor possessed a pearl, a marvelous pearl, an image of the Virgin Mary, dragged from the depths of the bay at La Paz, Mexico.

"WHO'S TO DO THE PLANNING, I OR YOU, VIEJO?"

The tourist, in company with Mr. Tait, would visit the stricken mariner. The tourist would fondle and examine the pearl. With the pearl in his personal grasp, the tourist would visit a jeweler to have the gem appraised. The sale consummated, Mr. Tait would settle his lily hand, light as the touch of an angel's lips, and where there had been in the little box the original Virgin pearl of great price, there would remain naught but the miserable phony fabrication of the Jins and the oysters of Hoochou.

Aye, that was a plan—simple, perfect. All that was required was the original jewel nestling in the old iron Pete in the dunnage-shop.

"Mace that little jane over the bean—I guess not!" the light-fingered gentleman observed. "Viejo, from now you be a little more audience and a little less orator—get that? I'm the manager. Leave me see them phonies, Ye Jin."

Ye Jin thrust a yellow claw into the baggy front of his shirt and brought forth

a small lacquered box. Into Tait's delicate palm Jin spilled the counterfeit pearl images.

Tait weighed them in his hand and stepped to the door of the shack to examine them more closely. Perfect imitations, perfect in every detail save that of weight. Mr. Tait had not enjoyed the opportunity to fondle the original, but Ye Jin explained that the lead filler rendered the phonies a trifle heavier than the original.

"WELL," HE ARGUED, "WE JUST GOT TO HAVE THE ORIGINAL PEARL TO WORK THIS NEW GAME"

"Them's swell work," declared Mr. Tait authoritatively. "If we don't jip a tourist or so— Now all we need is the original, and we're going to have it. And we ain't going to mace no jane over the bean with a sap, either!"

Viejo and Ye Jin looked up expectantly. What would be the cunning plan of the gentleman from Jefferson City?

Tait gave a pull at the lapels of the pinch-back coat and turned slowly about, as if he were a model exhibiting something for young men and men who would be young.

"We gotta have that pearl. All right! Take a slant at me, you birds. You birds leave it to me. I just been visiting the little jane in the dunnage-shop. I'm about half smart. I got some idea when a jane is about to fall. In a week we've got that pearl. Do you get that? Say"—Mr. Tait leaned and tapped Viejo upon the breast—"say, don't be surprised if that little jane *gives* me that pearl for a scarf-pin. No!"

Tait gave a fatuous laugh, smoothed back his sleek hair, and, still laughing, took a turn or two across the narrow floor.

IV

WITH studied discretion, Sarpedon Tait began making love to the little mistress of the dunnage-shop. Not by storm did he attempt to carry the citadel of her affections, but rather, like *Othello*, by the telling of fantastic lies. Born to great wealth, his life, he intimated, had been an idle one, almost a vicious one. The idle rich of his set, one and all, were a sad lot of dogs. Sarpedon Tait lowered his gaze and lowered his voice, as if softening the sound softened the transgression. In a halting whisper he hinted to Martie of that almost entanglement with a beautiful but wicked girl from a Chicago show-house. And he had gamed for high stakes. Money meant

nothing, whether lost or won; but even so, the very atmosphere of that gambling-hell had left upon his soul its malefic mark. As for drink—all, all the members of his set, men and women, drank—oh, how they drank! His life, thus far, had been worthless, selfish, profligate.

In shame and contrition, Sarpedon Tait hung his head. Then he leaned across the counter toward Martie. For an instant that lily hand of his held the honest hand of Martie Deane.

What he needed, to save himself from himself, was the interest, the—the friendship—of a good girl, a decent girl. There were decent girls, good girls, who were also beautiful girls. He knew of one.

He gave her hand a pat and turned away in sudden confusion.

He meant her! He hadn't said so in so many words, but he meant her.

As if answering a distress call from the dark, Martie's gentle, earnest heart went groping forth to find this boy and bring him in to where it was light and clean. He was worth saving. He needed guidance. He needed mothering, just as old Bennie needed mothering and bossing when the periodic longing for rum stingo was upon him; just as old Gaff needed mothering and restraining authority when, upon occasion, but for her, he would have chanced the very shoes off his feet against the fan-tan game in China Alley.

Sarpedon Tait wanted to do something for old Bennie and old Gaff. He wanted to do something for all such derelicts of the sea. What did Martie think of the idea of a home for sailors, built and maintained by the gift of a benefactor who didn't care to have his identity disclosed? Later, they would consider the details of the plan.

Also, Sarpedon Tait wanted to do something for Martie Deane.

"I wouldn't urge you," he said unctuously. "You've got some reason why you don't want to sell that pearl. I don't want to pry into your secrets; but if you ever do want to sell—I'll buy. The price don't matter."

Martie turned to the old iron safe, fetched forth the bamboo box, and slid back the lid. She tilted the box toward him. There, as if within its shrine, rested the holy image.

"There is a reason," she said softly. "It's on account of my brother Den. I haven't seen him since he was a boy. He ran away—to sea. Father had accused him of stealing a five-dollar gold piece. After Den had gone dad found the gold piece. It was then that my dad got his idea of trusting folks, of thinking the best of them, till they disproved it themselves. Dad kind of thought—and I do, too—that if we're good as we can be to sailor folks, to all folks that have kind of slipped their anchors, why, somebody is just bound to be good to Den. That pearl is Den's. Isn't she a beauty? She kind of stands to me for Den's chances in life. Some day he'll come back, Den will. When he knows dad found out he was wrong and left him the pearl for remembrance, why, then, can't you see the influence for good it 'll have on Den?"

Martie turned, placed the treasure in the old iron safe, swung the door, and turned the combination.

Again came Sarpedon Tait to the dunnage-shop, and still again. He would begin rather vaguely on his plans for a home for sailors, then shift his conversation to the pearl.

Upon two occasions this subterfuge failed: the old iron Pete sat undisturbed in its dark corner. But Mr. Tait, late of Missouri, had a soul of resource.

"I wouldn't urge you," said Tait, "but just remember that if you do ever decide to sell, the pearl is mine. The price don't matter. I've been looking over some pearls at Lamson's. None of 'em have got the wavery shine that this image has."

Mr. Tait jerked his thumb in the direction of the old iron safe.

Martie turned and gave the combination a twist. Returning, she placed the tiny shrine box upon the show-case between them.

Sarpedon Tait leaned toward Martie, looked her straight in the eye, held her glance.

"That's a beautiful thought, Martie," he said softly, "that idea about the pearl standing for your brother's chance in life. It's great!"

Martie Deane gazed into the gray-green eyes. Here was a profligate rich man worth saving. Not all his thoughts were sordid and selfish.

The lily hand of Tait, light as the touch of a falling leaf, hovered for an instant above the box. Then he drew his hand to him, turned away, sighed.

"I'M GOING," EXCLAIMED TAIT. "I'LL BE GONE—DON'T KNOW HOW LONG. STICK TO YOUR SYSTEM, LITTLE GIRL!"

In the pocket of his resplendent waistcoat rested the true pearl Virgin. In the little shrine box, upon the bed of cotton, lay one of the spurious gems fabricated by the cunning Jins of Hoochou.

V

THE girl closed the box and returned it to the safe. Mr. Tait, giving his waistcoat-pocket a surreptitious pat, was turning to go when Martie reached across the counter and laid hold of his sleeve.

"Just a minute," said Martie, laughing, and nodding her head over some design that she was about to work upon the rich man. "Just a minute!"

Old Bennie came in, dragged his foot to his corner, and began to spatter ink. Old Gaff came in, staring apprehensively over one shoulder.

Still Martie Deane clung to the sleeve of the pinch-back coat. With the free hand she was writing something on a slip of paper, which she handed to old Gaff. Gaff thrust the paper into a pocket, gathered up the serving-tray and the empty dishes, and went out. Old Bennie wound up his labors in an inky deluge and likewise departed.

Martie released Tait's sleeve, came out from behind the counter, and stood smiling up at him.

"You're going to eat lunch with me—right here in the dunnage-shop. Won't that be fun?"

The gray-green eyes shifted, and Mr. Tait swallowed hard a time or two.

Old Gaff, returning with the laden tray, all but collided with the postman in the doorway of the shop. Balancing the tray dexterously, waiter fashion, Gaff came in, handed Martie a letter, and placed the tray upon the counter.

Martie gave a glad cry, held out the letter, turned it over, and, womanlike, began spelling out the return address in the upper left-hand corner.

"From Den!" she said, her voice breaking. "From Den! See—'Trans-Pacific Steamship Company, San Francisco.' A mate on a tramp steamer, here a month ago, told me Den was working as purser on an Asiatic liner. I knew I'd hear—some day! Two weeks ago I wrote him, care of this company. Den—my brother Den!"

Martie's brown eyes shone softly; two spots of red burned upon her cheeks. She opened the envelope with trembling hands.

The smile faded. The face paled. The bright eyes went dull.

"The pearl is for sale—now." She folded the letter, returned it to the envelope. "Yes—now the pearl is for sale."

She stepped to the old iron safe.

Tait, his mouth twitching nervously, the gray-green eyes shifting, searching for a way of escape, began to stammer. He would gladly buy, just as he had said. It would require a day or so to get the money. He was a stranger. No one would care to cash a check for an amount so large. In a day or so, though, he would have the money and would buy the pearl.

"But I've got to have the money now," said Martie, fingering the envelope nervously. "Now—right now!"

She stood silent a moment, thrust the letter into the bosom of her dress, picked up her little toque hat from the shelf, and pinned it upon her head. Then she came from behind the counter, looked up at Tait, and laid her hand timidly upon his arm.

"Will you come with me, please? Times like this, oh, how one values a friend—a true friend!"

Tait stared at her wildly. Then he ran his finger around inside his high, tight collar. Martie hooked her hand into the crook of his elbow and led him to the door. Together they made their way across First Avenue and up Second Avenue into the heart of the shopping district. In the doorway of Lamson's jewelry-store, Martie brought him to a pause.

"I've just got to tell some one," she said, staring down at her feet; "and who, if not a friend, a true friend?"

Sarpedon Tait bent his head to catch the shamed, timorous words.

"Den's in trouble. What can you expect—boy, fifteen years old, turned loose in the world? The letter is from the steamship company. There's just a note from Den along with it. It seems—you see—something in the purser's accounts the company can't make out. Got to have fifteen hundred dollars—by wire—to-day. 'For God's sake send it, Martie,' Den says. 'Then I'll come home and be a man.'"

Martie looked up at Tait, but averted her gaze as if the crime were hers.

"You won't tell on me, will you?" she pleaded. "I know you won't!"

She opened the store door and entered. The proprietor came forward. At sight of the little box he exclaimed:

"Going to sell, Miss Deane? My offer is still good. Or is the gentleman here the buyer?"

Lamson reached for the open box that Martie had placed upon the glass, but quicker had been the slender, prehensile, baby-soft hand of Sarpedon Tait.

Tait lifted the box.

"I would buy it," he said haltingly, "but just now—I—you see—"

The box fell back upon the show-case with a soft clatter. Lamson fitted his jeweler's glass to his eye, lifted from its bed of snowy cotton the pearl Virgin.

"She's a beauty, Miss Deane. Will a check do?"

Martie nodded her head—yes. Lamson handed her an oblong piece of paper. Martie tucked her hand in Tait's arm, and together they left the place.

"I'll cash this right away," said Martie, "and wire the fifteen hundred to the steamship company. Then, why—our lunch. It 'll be all cold. I'll have Gaff—"

"No, no!" exclaimed Tait fiercely, angrily. "I don't want to eat. I'm going. I'll be gone—don't know how long. Stick to your system, little girl! Stick to your system! Good-by, little girl."

Tait grabbed both her hands, gave them a squeeze that hurt, was around the corner, in among the crowd—was gone.

Is Our Earth Destined to Be Destroyed?

VARIOUS DANGERS THAT MAY AWAIT THIS COMPARATIVELY TINY PLANET ON ITS UNCHARTED VOYAGE THROUGH INFINITE SPACE

By Charles Nevers Holmes

WILL the world ever be destroyed? Is it to be expected that sooner or later some catastrophe will eliminate our earth from the solar system and the universe? These questions do not mean the possible sweeping away of all existing life, animal and vegetable, from the terrestrial surface, but the total destruction of the earth in the spherical form that we know to-day.

Such destruction, should it ever occur, must necessarily be caused either by internal or by external agencies. In regard to the former, although we have but little precise knowledge concerning the interior of our globe, it does not seem possible that it contains anything threatening it with destruction, unless conditions exist of which we are wholly ignorant. The terrific shock of a violent earthquake or the devastation spread by a great volcanic eruption may suggest dangerous possibilities; but even if the earth has within it an immense core of gases under enormous compression, the tenacity of its crust and the action of gravity would prevent it from exploding "like a bombshell," to use the familiar simile.

The sudden breaking through of the oceans upon vast masses of fiery lava, or the creation of explosive substances within the terrestrial interior, would also be dangerous possibilities; but from our present knowledge it does not seem possible that our planet will be destroyed by forces from within. Such inside agencies as earthquakes and eruptions are limited to local death and destruction, and as the ages pass they seem likely to be less and less active.

If our world is ever destroyed, it will be by some outside agency, and there are several such that can be suggested as possible causes of its destruction.

We can hardly imagine that any of the known or unknown laws of the universe will suddenly cease operating, and the earth has got into such a habit of revolving around the sun that we may assume that it will continue to do so indefinitely.

Therefore, there is no apparent danger of its committing suicide by voluntarily leaping into the mighty luminary.

For the same reasons, there seems to be no danger of any other planet falling into the sun—a catastrophe which might disturb the balance of the solar system, and bring about the destruction of our globe by the fiery sun. As for the sun itself, unless some wholly unforeseen accident occurs, this central body will not go out of its way to harm any of its offspring. It is not likely to explode, any more than our earth; and even if it did, the latter might survive. However, in case the sun should be destroyed, it is safe to predict that human life, if not all forms of life, would disappear from the face of our earth.

If our world is ever to be destroyed, the probabilities are that its destruction will come from outside of our own solar system. Accordingly, we shall probably have plenty of time to await such a possible disaster. The destroyer may be either visible or invisible as it approaches us, but in all probability we shall be warned of its coming. Our astronomers are always alert, and their photographic negatives are very sensitive to light-rays, so that anything unusual happening to one of the nearer suns, or to Neptune and Uranus, the outermost planets of our system, would be discovered in time to inform us before any disaster drew near.

The passage of one of the nearer suns through an enormous extent of inflammable gases would be announced by an increase in the light-rays around that sun. It is probable that at least one of our planets—Jupiter—would ignite such a field of gases. Were our world to be surrounded for a considerable time by some intensely burning gas, like oxygen, its crust would be burned away, and the more plastic parts of its body would presently be consumed. The earth might be utterly destroyed by this means, for it is comparatively a small planet. And the existence of such a gaseous field in the pathway of our world is far from being an impossibility.

Our planet possesses several swift motions, one of them approximating nineteen miles per second and another eleven miles per second. Accordingly, were it to pass through any medium much denser than ether—perhaps a medium possessing a greater density than that of our own atmosphere, or perhaps a vast field of minute or larger particles—the probability is that it would be wholly or partly incinerated. Any one who has beheld the swift incineration of so-called shooting stars as they rush through upper regions of our atmosphere, will readily understand how our own world might be similarly destroyed.

AN UNCHARTED VOYAGE THROUGH SPACE

No one knows what may lie ahead of our little planet ship as she sails so swiftly through the universe, and probably there are conditions of which our modern scientists have not yet dreamed. But we do not need a scientist to inform us of the possible danger of the earth's destruction by collision with some stupendous sun, which would melt our comparatively tiny globe and incorporate it with its own body.

Our sun is more than a million times larger than the earth, and its heat is believed to measure thousands of degrees Fahrenheit; but the universe contains suns a thousand or more times larger than ours. Supposing our minute planet should collide with one of these stupendous bodies!

With our present knowledge of astronomy, we know no reason why such an immense sun should not enter our solar system and completely disrupt and destroy it. Were our world to strike the gigantic, fiery

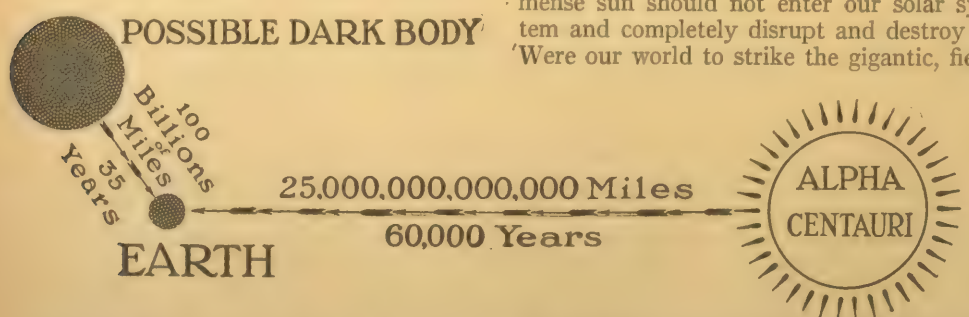


DIAGRAM SHOWING ALPHA CENTAURI, NEAREST OF THE KNOWN STARS, APPROACHING OUR EARTH AT A SPEED OF ABOUT FOURTEEN MILES PER SECOND, AND A POSSIBLE DARK BODY, MUCH NEARER, APPROACHING WITH A VELOCITY OF ABOUT ONE HUNDRED MILES PER SECOND

invader, she would make about as much impression upon him as a small pebble makes when it is thrown into a lake!

If our world is ever destroyed, it will probably be by collision rather than by incineration or other cause; and the possibility of its destruction in this way may not be nearly so remote as some of us believe. Probably there are huge dark bodies in the universe as well as huge fiery bodies; and since we are not able to see the former, one of them may be comparatively near us. However, we shall be warned of its approach long before it strikes the earth. The planetary sentinel of our solar system, Neptune, stationed approximately three billions of miles away, will indicate by the increasing irregularity of its orbit that we are in danger.

There is another dangerous possibility—that the several rapid motions of the earth may create a slight friction with the surrounding ether, so that after countless ages our planet, will be wholly destroyed by attrition. On the whole, it seems reasonable to prophesy that our world will probably be destroyed—not in this generation, or in the next, but *some time,* even though that time may not come until part of an eternity has passed.

The Tentacle

By Clarence Meily

Illustrated by Paul Stahr

SHORTLY after two o'clock on a crisp afternoon in late October the telephone in the reception-room of Messrs. Weismann & Burk rang out its staccato summons. Miss Collins, the office girl, who had been employed less than a week, placed the receiver to her ear and heard a woman's voice ask for Mr. Burk. It was a peculiar voice, unusually deep for a woman—an "oratorical voice," Miss Collins afterward called it.

By mistake, Miss Collins pressed the button that sounded the call-bell in Mr. Weismann's private room, and she heard through the telephone his answering:

"Hello!"

"It's for Mr. Burk, Mr. Weismann. My mistake," Miss Collins said through the telephone, being considerably flustered by her error.

Simultaneously she pressed the button connecting with Mr. Burk's room, which opened from the opposite side of the reception-room. Mr. Burk answered, but Miss Collins, being still nervous from her blunder, continued to listen, to assure herself that the connection was perfect. In this way she overheard the following conversation:

"Mr. Burk?"

"Yes, this is Mr. Burk."

"This is Adelaide, Mr. Burk."

"Oh, yes!"

"I have an investment for you—something extra fine."

"How much does it involve?"

"Fifteen hundred."

"That's a good deal of money."

"You won't say so when you see them. It isn't half price."

"All right. We'll talk over the transaction this evening."

"What time?"

"Eleven o'clock."

"The usual place?"

"Yes."

"Very well, Mr. Burk, I'll be there on time. Good-by!"

There was the click of a restored receiver, and Miss Collins, blushing violently at the realization that she had been eavesdropping, hung up her own receiver just in time to escape the notice of Mr. Burk, who emerged from his room and passed out into the corridor.

Mr. Burk did not return to the office. As subsequently developed, he visited his bank, where he drew fifteen hundred dollars in cash. He then attended a directors' meeting, which occupied him till five

"I DON'T CARE TO BE QUESTIONED ANY FURTHER. IF MILLER THINKS HE HAS GOT ANYTHING ON ME, LET HIM GO AHEAD"

o'clock. He was believed to have dined at some down-town café, and may have attended a motion-picture show, a form of entertainment of which he was fond. At all events, he was seen to enter the apartment-house where he had a bachelor's suite at about eight o'clock. He must have left the house later, however, for his bed remained unoccupied. He was not seen again alive.

Some two days later, Mr. Mellus, proprietor of the apartment-house where Mr. Burk resided, called at the office of the chief of police in a state of considerable anxiety.

Mr. Burk's prolonged absence had disturbed him greatly. Never before, in the course of his ten years' residence with Mr. Mellus, had Burk indulged in so extended and unexplained an absence. Always before, if he left town for a day—which rarely happened, his habits being of the most regular sort—he had left a message for his landlord, and usually an address. Mr. Mellus had communicated with his lodger's office and found that he had not been seen there, nor was his whereabouts known. This had added to the caller's uneasiness. He was persuaded that the affair had become one for the police.

Questioned more particularly as to the character and interests of the missing man, Mr. Mellus stated that he had known Mr. Burk for something over ten years. Mr. Burk was a man of middle age, a bachelor, and without relatives, so far as Mr. Mellus knew, or even intimate friends. His principal business was that of diamond-broker, and he was believed to possess considerable means. He had an office with a Mr. Frederick Weismann, a real-estate broker, but, as Mr. Mellus believed, there was no further business connection between them.

Weismann, Mr. Mellus understood, was a German, a chemical engineer by profession, who had lost his position in consequence of war-time prejudices, and had then undertaken a rather unsuccessful venture as a real-estate agent. Mr. Mellus believed that Mr. Burk had occasionally helped Weismann out with money and influence, but he did not think they could be called intimates. He himself was about as intimate an associate as Burk had had.

For a number of years Mr. Burk had been deeply interested in spiritualism, and he had a number of friends among mediums. Mr. Mellus, however, had not joined him in this pursuit, and his knowledge of Mr. Burk's spiritualistic researches was rather vague.

The case took the usual course in police circles, and was assigned for investigation to Detective Raymond, a veteran of the detective force. It was also mentioned at inspection the following morning. At this time, a patrolman, Officer Lewis, recalled that three nights before, while walking his beat in a remote residential district almost in the outskirts of the city, he had noticed a man, who might have answered Burk's description, entering the grounds of an isolated house, located well back from the street in the midst of an extensive lawn, about half a block from where the officer then stood.

The lateness of the hour and the fact that the house had long been vacant roused the curiosity of Officer Lewis. He walked past the place and scrutinized it, and thought he saw indications of a light in some of the lower windows. Supposing that a tenant had at last taken the premises, he went on, and had rounded the next corner when he seemed to hear a muffled scream or cry from the direction of the house. This was followed immediately by the faint sound of running footsteps.

He returned hastily and made an examination of the place, but could find no trace of human presence or occupancy. All doors and windows were securely locked, there was no light anywhere, and there was every appearance of emptiness and even of desolation. Officer Lewis had accordingly dismissed the incident from his mind, and recalled it now only because he had noticed on the lawn a printed sign giving the names of Weismann & Burk as agents for the property.

At Detective Raymond's suggestion, he and Officer Lewis secured a key from Mr. Weismann's office and went to explore the vacant house. It proved to be a modest frame structure of two stories, showing marked evidence of disuse and growing dilapidation. The lawn was ragged. The walks were broken and grown with weeds. The structure was weather-beaten and bare of paint, and had a forlorn and forbidding aspect. The blinds of the lower windows were closely drawn.

They unlocked and entered the front door, and found themselves in a narrow, old-fashioned hall, extending toward the rear of the building. A stairway at the right led to the floors above. Immediately in front of the stairs, and also to the left, doors opened into ground-floor apartments. Notwithstanding the long lack of inhabitants, as shown by the thick dust and musty odors, it was evident that the place was fully furnished.

Detective Raymond tried the door at the right, and admitted himself into what appeared, in the ghostly twilight that filtered through the shaded windows, to be a drawing-room. Easy chairs stood about, and there were a couple of small tables, one of which bore a reading-lamp. To the left

was a fireplace, with a grate containing the embers of a fire. The rear of the room was nearly closed by portières, which curtained the wide entrance to a room beyond.

A few feet in front of these portières, conspicuously and somewhat oddly placed with its back to the opening, stood a large leather chair, and on the floor in front of it, only dimly discernible in the obscurity, was a bulky, huddled, grotesque object. Officer Lewis hastened to raise the shades of a couple of the windows, and the two men stepped forward to examine this distorted shape. Raymond turned it over. It was the body of Burk, dead these three days.

II

It is an axiom of criminal investigation that the more ordinary the motive, the less clue it affords to the perpetrator of a crime. In this case the motive was commonplace enough. Burk's body had been stripped of all money and valuables, the pockets rifled, his expensive jewelry taken; but in the grate the officers found his watch, which was of unique design, and the charred remnants of his pocketbook, evidently discarded by the thief or thieves. It being apparent that a robbery of magnitude had been committed, the case passed under the control of the district attorney, and the corpse was removed to the county hospital for an autopsy to determine the cause of death.

It was a week later that Dr. Ward, the county autopsy surgeon, entered the office of District Attorney Forsyth bearing in his hand a typewritten report of his findings in the Burk *post mortem*. He laid it on the district attorney's desk and sank into a seat with a frankly worried air.

"What did you find?" Forsyth asked.

The surgeon shook his head.

"Nothing," he said.

"He died a natural death, then?"

Dr. Ward leaned forward, pulling nervously at his mustache.

"I wish I knew," he said.

"You mean—"

"I mean there is no discoverable cause of death. He just died. That is all."

"But people don't just die!"

"I know that as well as you do. That's what worries me. If I go on the stand and swear to that, I shall make myself ridiculous; but what can I do?"

"There are no marks of violence?"

"I have been over the body almost with a microscope. There isn't a scratch or a bruise. There is no such congestion as would show suffocation. The vital organs were perfectly healthy. I even examined them for poison. Nothing doing! I never saw such a case."

"Heart failure?" suggested the district attorney hopefully.

"His heart was the healthiest thing about him. I'm going to say he died of shock. I've got to say something."

"But a full-grown adult, in perfect vigor, couldn't very well be shocked to death. Do you mean you think he saw something? A ghost, perhaps?"

The district attorney was gently satirical.

"You needn't rub it in," said Dr. Ward irritably. "I don't know what to think. If I did, I wouldn't be sitting here drooling in this fashion. I suppose an utter, paralyzing fright might kill a man. Anyway, I'm going to say shock; but I warn you that if I'm cross-examined I shall have to confess the bald truth—that I don't know."

At the same hour that Dr. Ward was making this admission to District Attorney Forsyth, a client entered the office of Mr. Claude Ruggles, a young attorney formerly connected with the city prosecutor, but now developing a successful practise of his own, chiefly of a criminal nature.

The client was a youngish man, with a feline gaze and a sidelong, shifty manner of avoiding obstacles. He had a narrow face in which small eyes played furtively. His mouth wore a habitual smirk, as if he enjoyed a secret joke at the expense of the world at large. On being ushered into the private office, he stood obsequiously by Mr. Ruggles's desk and announced with an animated grin:

"I've got a claim for you, counselor."

Ruggles glanced up in mild astonishment. He was familiar with this type of client, but he had expected a different and more tragic grievance.

"Sit down," he said. "Tell me the trouble."

The client seated himself gingerly on the edge of a chair, holding his hat in his hands. His beady gaze traveled in quick, appraising glances about the room.

"It's like this," he said. "There's a woman that owes me money. She owes me three thousand dollars, I want you to get it. If you collect it, you get half, see?"

"Who is the woman?"

"Adelaide."

"Adelaide what?"

"How'd I know? Just Adelaide—Adelaide, the psychic marvel. Tells your name, age, where you come from, where you're going to, enemies, friends, past, and future, without asking a question. Readings one plunk, strictly in advance. Get it?"

"Fully. And how did she come to be owing you three thousand dollars?"

"Well, it's like this," said the client, his voice taking on a plaintive note. "I gives her these here sparklers, and she's to raise me twelve hundred on 'em, being not half what they're worth, see? And now I can't get any satisfaction. She don't give me either diamonds or money. I got my rights same as any man, ain't I?"

"So you want me to sue her?"

"Oh, no, nothing like that, counselor!" exclaimed the client in sudden alarm. "Don't start anything like that. I don't want any court proceedings. She'll come across without that."

"Oh, she will!" said Mr. Ruggles meditatively. "What is your name?"

"You can call me Miller."

"Is Miller your name?"

"It's a good name, ain't it, counselor?" said the client defensively. "A man's got a right to a name, ain't he? You haven't got any criticism on the name, have you?"

"All right. We'll call it Miller. And now, Mr. Miller, where did you get these diamonds?"

Mr. Miller was clearly pained by the crass impropriety of the question.

"What's that got to do with it?" he demanded with heat. "I give her the stones all right, under agreement. She don't deny it, and she's got to account for 'em. You don't need to go into details."

"But suppose Adelaide insists on going into details?"

"Well, now, it's like this," Mr. Miller answered, with a return of his quaint humor. "She ain't going to want any details. You saw in the papers about this fellow Burk being found dead in an empty house out in the southwest part of town, didn't you?"

Mr. Ruggles nodded.

"Well, you just mention Burk to her, counselor—not hinting at nothing, you understand, but just mention him. Like you'd say, 'Too bad about your friend Burk. The bulls ain't questioned you yet, have they?' or something like that. You won't have any trouble after that. She'll come across all right."

"You think she had something to do with Burk's death?"

"I don't think nothing!" protested Mr. Miller with renewed indignation. "I'm just telling you. You do it like I tell you, and you'll get the money. She'll soak her own diamonds to get it, if necessary. And she's got some jewelry, too, believe me! That is, she has so far," he added dreamily.

III

BEFORE addressing a letter to the psychic marvel requesting her to come to his office for an interview, Mr. Ruggles thought it wise to communicate an account of his queer client to Detective Raymond, of the city police force, with whom he had an old and valued friendship. As a result, Mr. Ruggles, though seemingly alone, was not in reality so when Adelaide visited him according to appointment a couple of days later.

She proved to be a large, handsomely garbed woman of forty, with an imposing presence and considerable claims to a certain somnolent beauty.

"You wished to see me, sir?" she asked, and Ruggles noticed the musical, throaty timbre of her deep voice.

"If you please, madam. Will you be seated?"

She sat down and waited, watching the lawyer out of expressionless eyes.

"You are acquainted with a Mr. Miller, madam?"

"I presume I know the person you mean."

"He placed certain diamonds with you for sale."

She did not answer; merely waited.

"He has asked me to recover them."

"I haven't got his diamonds."

"The money, then."

"I haven't either diamonds or money. I have told the little wretch so a dozen times. Those diamonds were stolen goods, if you want to know."

"I assumed so. What I want to ascertain now is whether they have been stolen a second time."

An angry flush rose under the woman's swarthy skin.

"You can spare your insinuations," she snapped. "The diamonds were lost. I don't know where they are."

"How were they lost?"

"I don't care to be questioned any further. If Miller thinks he has got anything on me, let him go ahead."

She rose to depart.

"Raymond!" Ruggles called, and Detective Raymond stood in the doorway.

The woman who called herself Adelaide turned a startled gaze from the detective to the lawyer. Then her lips, full and touched with carmine, curved into a sneer.

"Oh, a plant!" she said. "Well, go on with the show."

"Miss Collins!" Raymond called. "Will you please come here and see if you can identify this woman?"

Miss Collins's excited visage appeared over the detective's shoulder.

"It's her!" she cried. "I'd know that voice out of a thousand!"

"I never saw this young person before in my life," replied Adelaide.

"Let me introduce you," said Ruggles. "This is the late Mr. Burk's stenographer."

"SOMETHING CAME OUT FROM BETWEEN THE PORTIÈRES. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT WAS. IT BENT OVER HIS HEAD IN FRONT OF—

The effect of the lawyer's words was startling, almost spectacular. The clairvoyant's composure fell from her like a concealing cloak, leaving her emotions bare. She sank back into her seat with a hopeless gesture. Slowly her frightened, suffused eyes searched the faces in front of her.

"What do you want?" she asked finally.

"The straight, absolute truth from you," Raymond said gravely. "You took these stolen diamonds to sell to Burk, didn't you? Burk was a high-class fence, wasn't he?"

"Yes," she said sullenly.

"What were the diamonds? I want a description."

"Three rings, one a solitaire, one a ruby and three diamonds, the other a cluster round an opal; a bracelet of small pearls with a solitaire diamond clasp; a lavaliere of diamonds and sapphires in the design of a Greek cross, with a diamond pendant—that's all."

"You made this appointment with Burk, and he kept it. Then what happened?"

The woman suddenly covered her face

—HIS FACE. HE LOOKED UP, KIND OF STARTLED, AND THEN HE JUST SLUMPED DOWN IN HIS CHAIR, ALL LIMP AND DEAD"

with her gloved hands. A strangled sob, like the remnant of a half-assuaged terror, came from her.

"I don't know!" she cried. "As Heaven is my witness, I don't know!"

"Tell us what you saw," said Raymond more gently.

She struggled a moment for control of her voice.

"I would have told it that night," she said, "if it hadn't been for the errand I was on, and because I knew nobody would believe it. I had nothing to do with it. I wouldn't have harmed a hair of his head. I thought a great deal of Mr. Burk — too much, I expect. I have been nearly sick ever since."

"Begin with your arrival at the house," Raymond suggested. "What did you see?"

"I got there just at eleven. The front door was unlocked. I went into the parlor.

"There was a fire in the grate; the blinds were drawn, and lights lit. I thought, of course, that Burk was there and had stepped out for a moment. I sat down, and presently he came in. He seemed surprised to see me.

"'What — you here already?' he said. 'How did you get in?'

"'The door was unlocked,' I told him.

"He didn't make any answer, though he looked puzzled. Then he said:

"'Well, what have you got?'

"I took out the stones and showed them to him. He took them and sat down in a chair facing me—a chair that was standing just in front of the portières. There was a small table near, with a reading-lamp on it that gave a good light. The portières were close drawn. He began to look over the diamonds, taking out a magnifying-glass and looking them over the way experts do. Then something, I don't know—"

She was again in the grip of her feelings, struggling with mingled grief and fear. She

buried her face in her hands, and it was some minutes before she could speak.

"Go on! What did you see?" Raymond demanded.

"Something came out from between the portières. I don't know what it was. It bent over his head, in front of his face. He looked up, kind of startled, and then he just slumped down in his chair, all limp and dead. I saw he was dead. Just in an instant, he was dead. I couldn't move a muscle. Then I got my voice, and screamed, and ran. As I went down the steps I know the lights were turned out and everything was like the grave. I ran for blocks, and then I think I fainted. I don't know yet how I got home."

"And this thing that came out from between the portières—what was it like?"

"I can't describe it. I thought at first it was a snake, but I saw it didn't have any head. It waved and curved around like the tentacle of a devil-fish. It seemed to play in front of his face. The whole thing happened in an instant. I was so frightened I could hardly tell what I saw; and yet I can't get it out of my sight, either."

"What became of the jewels?" Raymond asked after a moment's hesitation.

"He had them in his hands when he fell. They spilled over the carpet. If it was a robbery, as the papers say, I suppose they took them, too."

"Have you made any effort to recover them?"

"Me?" cried the woman. "I should say not!"

"You want this thing cleared up, don't you, and the murderers brought to justice?"

"I'll do anything I can," she declared.

"I think," Raymond said, after a little thought, "you had better advertise for the jewels. You will describe them carefully, and merely state that they are lost. You will offer to pay three thousand dollars in cash for their return, and no questions asked. It's only a chance, but it's worth trying. This is Saturday. An advertisement published in to-morrow morning's papers ought to bring results by Tuesday. You will report any answers you may get at once to me."

"Whatever you say," Adelaide agreed with meekness.

IV

As Raymond had predicted, the advertisement for the lost gems bore fruit the following Tuesday. On the afternoon of that day the detective entered the office of his young friend Ruggles in a state of poorly concealed excitement.

"I think we're on the track, all right!" he declared. "Look at this! Adelaide brought it in an hour ago."

Ruggles took the envelope which the other held out. It bore the local postmark, and the address had been formed by the familiar expedient of cutting words and letters from a newspaper and pasting them on the envelope. The letter itself, on a piece of ordinary note-paper, had been similarly written. It was without introduction, and read:

> If you want your diamonds, bring the three thousand to 429 Larch Street at midnight Tuesday. Come alone. No tricks. Jewels will be there.

Ruggles looked up with a blank stare.

"Why, the incredible nerve!" he exclaimed. "That's the house where Burk's body was found!"

"It does appear pretty raw," admitted the detective. "There is either something back of it that we don't understand, or else it's the work of amateurs who are lacking in criminal resource. Anyway, we'll find out to-night. Want to go along?"

"I couldn't be hired to miss it."

"Very well. Come to headquarters at eight. I'll post a cordon round the premises as soon as it's dark, and you and I will go inside and wait. Adelaide will be on hand at midnight."

The November darkness fell early, under a clouded sky prophetic of snow. A gusty wind came at intervals through the bare boughs and sent tiny swirls of dead leaves chattering along the pavements. There was a penetrating chill in the air, which caused the detective and his companion to shrink within their overcoats as they approached the house on Larch Street. They entered the premises from the rear, coming across some vacant lots from a distant avenue. Trees and bushes here, and behind the Larch Street edifice, afforded them shelter from observation.

The house, as they came near it, looked more ghostly and sinister than mere emptiness and decay seemed to justify. An atmosphere of deadly enigma, of something threatening and insatiate, hung about it, to Ruggles's fancy, and divorced it from whole-

some, human ways. The young lawyer found himself half wishing that he had not come; but the detective plodded ahead stoically, intent on doing a creditable piece of work.

They circled the building warily and entered through the front door, the key to which Raymond had kept. They passed through the hall into the front drawing-room, where Burk had met his end, discovering their way by means of the detective's electric flash-light.

Careful to avoid disturbing anything, Raymond, with his companion following, stepped through the still parted portières into the room beyond. They were then in a living-room, larger and more elaborately furnished than the other, but even more heavily mantled in dust and musty odors. Toward the farther end, a door opened in the direction of the hallway. Opposite was a bay window hung with mildewed curtains. To right and left of this were book-cases, while at the farther end of the room stood a piano. A large library-table and numerous chairs completed the principal furnishings.

Raymond surveyed the ensemble with practised eye.

"Not much chance of concealment here," he said. "We might try the hall and leave that door open a crack."

He advanced and tried the door, which opened at his touch. He stepped back, alarmed.

"A closet!" he exclaimed. "Underneath the stairs. Why, the place is a regular *cul-de-sac*. The only exit is through that front room."

"There is another door behind that piano," Ruggles observed.

"So there is; but we can't disclose our presence by disturbing the furniture."

"How about the bay window?"

"No chance. We would be silhouetted against the glass. The windows go nearly to the floor. We'll have to take the risk of the closet, but I don't like it."

The detective continued to mutter protests as he explored the interior of the closet, which was empty.

"What time is it?" he demanded.

"Nine o'clock," Ruggles answered.

"Three hours yet! Well, we might as well take our places. We don't know when they'll come."

They ensconced themselves in the closet, crouching together in the malodorous darkness. They talked for a time in whispers, then were silent. Time passed in an interminable monotony of hours. After what seemed a century, Raymond roused again and asked:

"What time is it now?"

By the cautious glint of the flash-light Ruggles examined his watch.

"Just five minutes before midnight," he announced.

"Hush!" whispered Raymond, and they held their breaths.

There was a sound which indicated that a key was being fitted into the lock of the front door. A moment later they knew the door had been opened. There was muffled movement in the hall, followed by more distinct footsteps in the front room. They saw the glimmer of a match, and then once more came darkness and silence.

This was presently broken, however, by a renewed stir. Peering through the crack in the closet door over Raymond's shoulder, Ruggles could see a dim shape outlined in the opening of the portières. It moved forward, and the portières were gently drawn together, bringing again the effect of darkness. They could now hear steps and slight shiftings of furniture in the room. Arrangements of some sort seemed to be in progress. Ruggles thought he could detect the crinkling of paper, as of a package being handled or unwrapped.

Suddenly Raymond gripped his wrist with fingers that bit into the flesh. There were steps plainly audible, bold this time and undisguised, along the front porch.

"Adelaide!" breathed the detective noiselessly, and at the same instant every item in the room in front of them burst into theatric view as the electric lights overhead flared into bewildering brilliance.

V

THE next few moments seemed to Ruggles like an insane nightmare. He knew that Raymond, with a shout of warning that split the night, had hurled open the closet door and was half dragging, half carrying him in a mad leap across the room toward the bay window. He had a second's confused glimpse of a figure standing in front of the portières, with something partly concealed in wrapping-paper in its hands.

The shape turned at Raymond's shout, and Ruggles, even in that delirious instant, experienced a qualm of strange horror at seeing that the face was enveloped in a

black and unnaturally protuberant mask. Then, amid a shower of splintered wood and shattered glass, they crashed through the window and fell upon the cement walk underneath.

Raymond rose, shrieking.

"Adelaide!" he shouted. "Adelaide! Run! Run for your life! Get out of the house! Run!"

As if reason had quite left him, he began in a frenzy to gather broken pieces of the cement under their feet and hurl them through the lower windows of the house.

"Smash every window!" he cried to Ruggles, who began mechanically to imitate him.

Other figures loomed round them in the darkness—the officers whom Raymond had stationed around the place. One of these supported the hysterical and half-fainting figure of the clairvoyant. Having reduced all the windows in the two rooms to gaping holes, Raymond ceased his tempest of destruction and wiped his forehead.

"Stand back!" he ordered. "Stand well back and wait!"

They obeyed him and waited in a stillness that contrasted oddly with the furor of the moment before. The gusty wind, which had swelled to almost a gale, swept through the swaying curtains and torn shades of the demolished windows. Not a sound or trace of movement came from the interior of the rooms, where the garish lights continued to burn.

An eery feeling that they had been attacking something intangible, something ghostly, beset the young attorney. He turned inquiringly to the detective.

"We'll try it now," Raymond said, drawing an automatic from his pocket. "You can go with me, Ruggles, if you are willing to take a chance. The rest of you stay out here and shoot if anybody tries to get out through the windows."

Followed by Ruggles, the detective returned to the front door and entered the house, holding his pistol ready for instant use. The two passed through the front room, and very cautiously Raymond parted the portières and peered between them. Then he stepped boldly forward. On the floor, face downward beneath the streaming lights, lay the lifeless body of a man. Raymond bent and turned the face upward to the light.

"Weismann!" he gasped. "The man Burk officed with!"

Near the hand of the dead may lay the black gas-mask torn from his head, and close by was the devilish engine of murder which, when trapped, he had turned upon himself. It consisted of a small, metallic gas-tank, fitted with a valve and nozzle to which was attached a section of rubber garden-hose, supported by a rod and manipulated by a cord fastened to its farther end.

In the freshened air there still lingered a faint odor suggestive of crushed peach-leaves.

AUTUMN'S PATHWAY

Passing Autumn with her paint-brush
  Dressed the woods in colors bold,
Splashed the sky with deeper sunsets—
  Primrose, sapphire, marigold;

Culled the leaves in brilliant windrows,
  Shook the ripe nuts from the trees,
Bronzed the squashes and the pumpkins,
  Stacked the wheat in golden seas;

Coaxed Jack Frost to kiss pale apples
  Into rosy-glowing spheres,
Hung the sunlit, spreading vineyards
  Low with grapes like purple tears;

Opened all her treasure-chambers,
  And, with gracious hands outflung,
Danced while Winter, piping softly,
  Wide her snowy portal swung.

Virginia Stuart

The Odd Measure

A New Form of Roadside Trade

Farmers and Fruit-Growers Sell Their Wares to Motorists

IN the old days, thousands of pedlers went along the main roads of the United States, carrying from house to house the manufactures of New England, from clocks and tinware to the fanciest of rugs and gewgaws. The tin-pedler is still an institution in certain districts; store-boaters ply their trade along the Ohio and the Mississippi; from many towns pedlers of meat and groceries circle in ever-widening countryside trading for the day. The once-famous Altoona wagon-traders, who worked down into the foot-hills of the Blue Ridge, gathering chickens in exchange for town-made goods, are disappearing—and so are all the other pedlers, for that matter. The mail-order houses and rural free delivery have taken their place.

Now the towns are going to the country for their supplies, and along many of the famous highways are found tiny trading-stations, where farmers put out in front of the old homestead a table with baskets of berries, trays of apples, bundles of sweet corn, and even dozens of eggs that show how fresh they are. From these few articles on a small sewing-table or mere box, to booths containing a varied assortment, farmers are selling to the automobile tourist vast quantities of things to eat—at city prices. The Lake Road from Buffalo to Toledo, the Lincoln Highway, and other thousands of miles of well-traveled automobile thoroughfares are all marked by the wayside sale-stations, in practical recognition of the purchasing power of the traveling household buyers. Near New York they may be seen here and there in New Jersey and on Long Island, and especially in the fruit-growing district along the west bank of the Hudson, above Newburg.

The amount of trade done is important, speaking commercially. Village and even city stores feel the effects when hundreds of their patrons drive out to the sources of supply, to buy eggs, berries, chickens, maple-sirup, honey, home-made candy, and other delicacies. The market columns of the newspapers set the price of eggs at the wayside, and they jump from sixty to sixty-eight cents a dozen overnight, even as on the greater exchanges. The freshness of the supply and the pleasure of the ride make the price paid for the gasoline transportation well spent.

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The Twenty-Eight Informers of Laon

The Merited Punishment of a Gang of Spies and Traitors

THE trial in Paris of the twenty-eight "informers of Laon" was somewhat overshadowed by that of Landru, the imitation *Bluebeard* who practised a well-known system in order to acquire the small belongings of his feminine victims. The French are turning greedily now to any sensation that has nothing to do with the war, and the trial of the informers had nothing to do with anything but the war. It was an interesting case, nevertheless.

The collection of twenty-eight opprobrious specimens was made by a German spy, one Thomas, who was sent to Laon for the purpose immediately after the Germans felt securely settled in that town. The confederates he gathered there were a motley crowd—three German residents, a French waiter, a law clerk, some disloyal farmers, and several women of the streets. And then there was Toqué—a former official of the colonial ministry who had "done time," a social outcast—Toqué, which is appropriately, in French slang, the equivalent of our "cracked head."

Their victims will never be fully counted, but the known list of tortures, deportations to slavery, and summary shootings for which these agents of the German spy system are responsible is frightful enough.

Probably they would never have been found out but for a purely accidental encounter. On the day when King Albert of the Belgians was fêted by all Paris, a poilu, who had barely escaped being victimized by the spy Thomas, met the man strolling among the holiday crowds. He told the police, Thomas was arrested, and, running true to form, he forthwith betrayed every one of his associates at Laon.

Of the twenty-eight, Toqué is the most interesting both to criminologists and to psychologists. Of good middle-class stock, a university graduate, he obtained a post in the French colonial judiciary, where he took particular delight in punishing natives by blowing them up with sticks of dynamite. He was charged with official misconduct, and an unaccountably mild sentence to several years at hard labor followed; but when he left prison he was a marked man, shunned by those of his own class. He tried newspaper work and drifted to blackmailing sheets; he tried photography and goodness knows what else—unsuccessful in everything, and an old man before his time. The war gave him the undeserved dignity of a private's uniform. A short leave, and he went to Laon, just before the Germans took it. He remained, met Thomas, and found with him congenial and lucrative employment—while it lasted. But "Marianne"—the symbol of France—put her hand on his shoulder, through a French poilu and a German spy, and now she has made him pay the price of his vileness.

* * * * *

A Mission from the Court of Abyssinia

The Modern Queen of Sheba Sends Richly Clad Envoys to Washington

NEVER, perhaps, since the Queen of Sheba personally headed a deputation to call on King Solomon, has a more interesting embassy been sent from the far regions of Ethiopia than the mission that recently came to visit the Great Chief at Washington, bringing greetings from Her Majesty the Empress of Abyssinia, descendant and heiress of Sheba's queen.

The chief envoy, Dadjazmatch Nado, addressed President Wilson in the native Amharic tongue, and the President replied in English, expressing his hope for closer relations between our comparatively youthful republic and a kingdom that was old when the history of the modern world began. Clad in velvet and cloth of gold, and glittering with jewels, the four members of the mission were worthy representatives of their land of barbaric splendor and of their empress, Waizeru Zauditu, daughter of Menelik, the warrior king.

Born in 1876, the empress succeeded her nephew, Dij Yasu, who was deposed in 1916. She was crowned in 1917, and another nephew, Ras Taffari, was proclaimed heir to the throne. The existing Abyssinian state was built up on the ruins of the kingdom of Amhara, after the tyrant Theodore was overthrown by the British in 1868. It reached power and prosperity under Menelik, a prince of Shoa, who assumed full control in 1889. Under him were grouped together Gallas, Somalis, Shoans, and Tigrians, the Shoans being the ruling military class. Christianity had been preached among them in the fourth century by the missionary Frumentius, a disciple of Athanasius, and the Abyssinian church disputes with that of Armenia the right to call itself the oldest national Christian communion in the world.

Aloof from the march of European civilization throughout long centuries, they once more came in touch with it in 1885, when Italy, on the lookout for colonies for her growing population, began the exploitation of the neighboring district of Eritrea. For years the armed strength of Italy was brought to a halt before the stubborn resistance of King Menelik and his able general, Ras Alula; and the decisive Abyssinian victory at Adowa, in 1896, was followed by the peace of Addis Abeba. Later, the integrity of Abyssinia was mutually guaranteed by England, France, and Italy, and Menelik's daughter now holds peaceful and undisputed sway over an empire

including nearly four hundred thousand square miles, the most powerful and important native state in Africa.

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Commerce in Abyssinia

Italian Traders Control Most of It, and Its Methods Are Peculiar

IN 1905 the late Emperor Menelik of Abyssinia established a bank, which mints coins and issues paper money, the principal coin being the tarari, worth about fifty cents. But as the foreign trade of the country is mainly in the hands of Italians, Italian currency is also in general circulation.

In a certain shop in Florence there may be seen a diploma issued by Menelik—a sort of trader's letters patent, rather curiously combining royal pomposity and primitive simplicity. It shows a portrait of the ruler wearing his imperial straw hat; beside him is his consort, her black hair drawn back severely from her forehead; and near by is the young heir to the throne, recently deposed. Below is inscribed:

> We, Menelik II, King of Shoa, by these letters authorize Giuseppe Gualleroti, of Florence, manufacturer of sirups, sweets, and liqueurs, to manufacture these good things for us, and we hereby authorize him to place our royal coat of arms above the door of his workshop. Given at Entotto, April 18, 1886.

Another Italian-Abyssinian trader, known along the Red Sea from Suez to Aden, is Skander (Alexander) Seror, a native of Leghorn, who makes his headquarters at Massowa. He has lived so long among the natives that he has become as one of them. He lives in an unending cloud of cigarette-smoke, and has taken on the dreamy ways of the Orient as a cloak to business. Skins and rubber and pearls are all one to him; he buys what he finds.

Would you know how sales are conducted in Abyssinia? Stretched on a divan, Skander listens to the would-be sellers without impatience, smoking countless cigarettes and drinking coffee, which he passes around to his clients. Then suddenly he gets up, puts on his hat, and goes out, leaving the assembled merchants without a word. They wait patiently for his reappearance, meanwhile smoking his cigarettes and drinking his coffee. He remains away for hours, perhaps, but when he returns they are still there. He utters a single word—either "*Tain*" (yes), or "*Mafisc*" (no), and they understand that the transaction is confirmed or rejected. They retire, bowing, and knowing that it is useless to try to make any other sale that day.

Our American salesmen may find that they have much to learn before they can do business successfully in the realm of the Empress Zauditu.

* * * * *

Two Nationalist Delegations from South Africa

Dutch and Negro Missions Present Their Political Claims

WHILE the Dutch-speaking nationalists of South Africa succeeded in sending to the peace conference in Paris—by a long and devious route, though with the consent of the British government—a delegation to advocate independence for South Africa, another body of delegates from the same territory made its way to the Colonial Office in London to advocate the removal of the existing color bar. They called themselves the representatives of the Native Nationalist Congress of South Africa, and included Mr. Thelma, a Basuto, and Mr. Myabaza, a Zulu, both educated and politically intelligent men.

Their demands were that the present political disabilities of the native races should be removed from the Act of Union. The Colonial Office pleaded inability, and referred them to their home government; but the delegates urged that as the color bar was put in the act with the consent of the imperial Parliament, the imperial Parliament should take steps to have it removed.

One of the most galling of the restrictions of what the natives regard as their rights is the Pass Law, which requires them to take out permits to move from place to place, a fee being charged for each permit. The annual

revenue from this source is stated at about fifteen hundred thousand dollars.

It shows no small political acumen that these races should insist on bringing their national issue to the front at a time when national and racial divisions of all kinds are so much in the lime-light, and when world statesmen are busy making the world, if not safe for democracy, at least a land of opportunity for peoples hitherto handicapped. But the problem presented is no easy one, for the twelve or thirteen hundred thousand European inhabitants of South Africa are hopelessly outnumbered by more than four times as many natives, most of whom are in a more or less primitive state of civilization, and who, moreover, are multiplying with great rapidity now that civilized rule has ended the murderous tribal wars that used to keep down their increase. Political equality is manifestly impossible if that great region is to remain a habitation for white men.

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Belated Recognition for a Hero of Zeebrugge

How Commander Brock Met His Death on the Blood-Drenched Mole

BY testimony given before a British commission empowered to hear claims growing out of the war, one of the mysteries of the Zeebrugge affair has recently been solved. At the time when Captain Carpenter made his heroic attack on the mole of the chief German base on the Belgian coast, the name of Wing-Commander Brock, of the Royal Naval Air Squadron, was prominent in the newspaper despatches. The question was asked, what was he doing in that *galère?* It was known that he had invented a smoke-screen which was used by the attacking vessels, but this hardly explained his dash ashore with the landing-party and his death beside the German guns.

An official witness, in paying tribute to Commander Brock's services, cleared up the mystery. Brock had come to the conclusion, which Admiral Jellicoe has since publicly confirmed, that the Germans had a range-finder superior to that used by the British Navy. He therefore begged to be allowed to join in the dash ashore at Zeebrugge, because it might give him an opportunity of finding out the nature and construction of the enemy's instrument; and it was on the blood-drenched mole, in the terrific turmoil of the attack, while he was quietly examining the scientific principle of the German device, that he met his death.

This statement was made before the commission during the hearing of a claim on behalf of his widow for compensation for an anti-Zeppelin bullet invented by her husband. The Brock bullet had been instrumental in bringing down three or four German air-ships. It was shown in evidence that it was the only bullet that had succeeded in setting fire to a gas-bag at more than two hundred yards' range, one of the peculiarities of the missile being its extreme sensitiveness, which causes it to burst into flames on piercing, or even touching, the outer fabric of the balloon. The commission agreed to the widow's claim, and awarded her a sum amounting to nearly one hundred thousand dollars.

* * * * *

The Real Armageddon

Allenby's Army Actually Fought There During the Great War

NOW that the war is over and the world has come safely through Armageddon, it may be worth while to recall the literal meaning of that dreaded and much-abused word. Many of those who have used it in our public press could not have told its origin, but they seemed to think that it had some sort of association with Satan or Apollyon, and that it suited the appalling horrors of the world war.

Originally we find it in a passage in the Book of Revelation, where the Sixth Angel pours out his vial of wrath on the Euphrates:

> And I saw spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirit of devils which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle

of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Scholars tell us that Armageddon means the hill of Megiddo, which lies above the plain of Esdraelon, or valley of Jezreel, commanding the approaches to the upper Jordan. When the seer of the Apocalypse chose it to symbolize the battle-field of the kings of the world, he did so because it was the chief strategic gateway to Palestine, and was connected with many of the military events in Jewish history. General Allenby captured it to cut off the Turks in the late war; Napoleon used it in his attempted invasion of Syria; by the waters of Megiddo Sisera was defeated; Gideon won a victory in the valley of Jezreel; and in sight of the hill of Megiddo Saul met disaster at the hands of the Philistines, moving David to write his lament on the fall of the mighty. Near Megiddo, too, King Josiah was slain by the Egyptians when, like the gallant Albert of Belgium, he ventured to oppose Pharaoh Necho, who was marching across his territory to attack Babylon.

The defeat of Josiah made Judah tributary to Egypt and impressed itself on the national imagination as the Waterloo, or the Marne, of the Jewish race. Thus it was that the prophet fixed on Armageddon as the symbol of the conflict he foretold.

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George Eliot's Centenary

She Was Born Near Nuneaton in November, 1819

THE English midland town of Nuneaton, in Warwickshire, is celebrating the centenary of George Eliot, born November 22, 1819. The town has changed greatly since Mary Ann Evans lived there as a girl. It is moving with the times, the mayor says. The house where she was born—the old farmhouse in Arbury Park—is still standing, but when Mary Ann was four months old the family moved to Griff House, a pleasant old ivy-covered house on the Coventry Road, which is now a dairy school of the Warwickshire County Council.

Nuneaton was a quiet market town in those days, but it has grown noisy and populous since the development of the near-by coal-fields. It is proud, however, of its "great citizen," as the Bishop of Birmingham calls her, and the cost of the celebration is being defrayed "out of the rates," as is the English way of putting it. George Eliot put Nuneaton on the map. In "Janet's Repentance" she calls it "Milby." Arbury Hall is her "Cheverel Manor," and the Newdegate Arms is her "Oldenport Arms" in "Scenes from Clerical Life," while the Red Lion is identified as her "Bull Hotel." Nuneaton streets live in those earlier stories of hers, and people who walked them only yesterday were identified as the originals of certain characters, for, as George Eliot said herself, she drew her portraits with too uncautious a hand.

When her early works appeared there was great curiosity among the townspeople as to who the mysterious and gifted George Eliot was, and suspicion fastened on a Mr. Liggins, who had some local reputation as a poet. Liggins was not unwilling to pose as a writer of clever fiction, but when the public was about to subscribe money to help this supposed literary genius, Miss Evans was forced to reveal her identity as George Eliot. That was in 1857, after she had gone to live with George Henry Lewes, whom Douglas Jerrold described as the ugliest man in London. Lewes died in 1878. In May, 1880, at the age of sixty-one, she again amazed her friends by marrying John Walter Cross, a friend of long standing, but she died at Christmas-time that same year.

They are now erecting a memorial to George Eliot in Nuneaton, and at a recent meeting to promote this worthy object, Canon Blofield, of Saltley College, proposed as the toast of the evening: "The borough of George Eliot."

THE STAGE

THE STORY OF THE ACTORS' STRIKE, WRITTEN DURING AND AFTER THE EVENT

By Matthew White, Jr.

"AN unprecedented condition of affairs in the theatrical world, due to no fault of its own," was the heading of this department last January, when I reported the darkening of many houses owing to the ravages of the influenza. I little realized then that before a year had elapsed the first clause in this sentence would again be a timely phrase. The actors' strike began on August 7, with the closing of ten theaters in New York. In less than three weeks the number of dark houses had risen to twenty-one, and the strike had spread to Chicago. As I write, the end is not yet, and what one man described to me as "child's play," promises to lose millions of dollars to those most nearly concerned —actors, managers, playwrights, costume-makers, scene-painters—in fact, all who have any part or lot in entertaining the public in the higher-class theaters.

What was it all about, and who started it? Briefly, the actors wanted eight performances to constitute a week's work, with extra pay for any over that number, such as the Sunday night show, which is usual in the Western theaters. They also asked half-pay for rehearsals, if these lasted more than four weeks, and the settlement of all differences by arbitration.

The managers were willing to grant these demands, but stuck at one other point—a recognition of the Actors' Equity Association, by which the strike was ordered. They had had more or less amicable dealings with this society during the six years of its existence, but their love for it grew cold the instant the Equity affiliated itself with the American Federation of Labor. It is not likely that they foresaw the possibility of an actors' walkout, despite the threats of such a revolt made in midsummer of the most successful hot-weather season the New York theater had ever enjoyed. They may have recalled the horror of certain players when the Theatrical Syndicate was formed, and the outcry raised against the commercialization of an art consecrated by Shakespeare. Could these be the same folk who, decorated with white sashes, were parading up and down in front of the few houses whose casts refused to join them, endeavoring to persuade the public to stay away? But if the managers have the right to organize, surely the actors should be accorded the same privilege, argue these wearers of sock and buskin; and as the days and weeks passed, each side grew more determined, angry words were exchanged, and the breach constantly widened.

Peculiarly difficult was the position in which David Belasco and George Cohan found themselves. Both prominent members of the Managers' Producing Association, each was also an actor. Although it may not be generally known, Belasco in his time has played no fewer than one hundred and seventy-two parts, including *Hamlet* and *Uncle Tom.* Both had become widely known as stanch friends of the actor; and yet it would have been treachery to desert their brothers in management for what might be regarded as purely sentimental reasons. Indeed, both Belasco and Cohan seem to have been more outspoken than the rest in their loyalty to the Managers' Association, declaring that rather than give in to the Equity they would never produce another play. Cohan resigned from both the Lambs and the Friars, and Belasco from the Lambs.

A curious feature of the situation is the fact that three of the managers have actresses for wives—Ziegfeld, who is the husband of Billie Burke; William A. Brady, for whom Grace George keeps house; and Adolph Klauber, with Jane Cowl as his better half.

The strike worked especial hardship to Mr. Klauber, whose first venture as a producer was to have been submitted to the judgment of Broadway on the very night when the outbreak started. One of its authors—a woman whom I happen to know —had been working for years to achieve a

New York *première*. To get as close to it as this and then to have the cup of joy snatched from her lips through a quarrel with which she had no concern, can only be compared with the experience that fell to another playwright of my acquaintance. For many weary moons he had been endeavoring to place a script. Both New York and London spurned it, but at last—wonder of wonders!—Paris looked upon the piece with favor, and it was billed for the Comédie Française when the world war intervened and stopped it.

Hard hit by the heavy loss of royalties owing to the closing of so many theaters, thirteen of the playwrights got together in the second week of the walkout and endeavored to patch up a peace. The man-

LALLA SELBINI, ONE OF THE SPECIALTY ARTISTS IN THE NEW SPECTACLE AT THE HIPPODROME, "HAPPY DAYS"

From a photograph by White, New York

HELEN FREEMAN, LEADING WOMAN IN "JOHN FERGUSON," THE TRAGEDY THAT RAN ALL SUMMER IN NEW YORK

From a photograph by Francis Bruguiere, New York

agers would not listen to them, whereupon the authors in their turn organized; so possibly, when the present quarrel is a thing of the past, the playwrights may start another. They would do well to remember, however, that while they might attack the managers by bringing out their own plays—as some of them do—they cannot get along without actors. The players, on the other hand, can write their own material, to say nothing of having Shakespeare and other authors of the past to fall back upon.

Partizans of either side in the fight were bitter in their denunciation of the methods employed by the opposition.

"Why," an adherent of the managers would declare, "the players' deliberate breach of their contracts puts them right in a class with the Germans and the scrap of paper they tore up in the shape of their treaty with Belgium!"

On the other hand, Ethel Barrymore, in an interview for the New York *Times,* plaintively exclaimed:

"And it is so little we ask! We never realized how hard the managers were till they refused us that little. Why, they are behaving exactly like the Kaiser and the whole Prussian military crowd. Their argument is that of force."

A new element was injected into the squabble in its third week by the organization of a second association of players—the Actors' Fidelity League—siding with the managers, having for its president George M. Cohan, who resigned from the managers' body in order that he could accept the new office with a clear conscience. Louis Mann was chosen as vice-president, William Collier as treasurer, and among the directors are David Warfield, Holbrook Blinn, and Fay Bainter. If the schism is to be permanent, the splitting up of the theatrical field into two hostile camps is going to be a terrific handicap in the casting of a play. Imagine another piece on the order of "Lightnin'" coming along, and not being able to engage Frank Bacon for the leading part because he happens to belong to the A. E. A. instead of the A. F. L.! By these latter initials I do not mean the American Federation of Labor, which has cast in its lot with the Equity, but the Actors' Fidelity League.

ETHEL BARRYMORE, STARRING UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CHARLES FROHMAN COMPANY, IN A NEW PLAY BY ZOE AKINS, "DECLASSÉE"

From a copyrighted photograph by the Strauss-Peyton Studio, Kansas City

BETTY COMPSON, IN THE PHOTOPLAY VERSION OF "THE MIRACLE MAN," WHICH FIRST APPEARED AS A STORY IN THIS MAGAZINE

Funds for the strikers were obtained by a series of literally all-star performances at the huge Lexington Opera House, where one could see—at the top price of two dollars, and in one bill—Ethel and Lionel Barrymore and Conway Tearle in the second act from "Camille"; Frank Tinney and Pearl White in an amusing colloquy; Ed Cantor, W. C. Fields, and Van and Schenck in three acts from this year's Follies; Marie Dressler in a unique number showing why it need not take twelve weeks

to rehearse a chorus; and a striking number paraphrasing *Mark Antony's* oration over *Cæsar's* body, declaimed by Brandon Tynan as an appeal for justice to the actor.

This last was written by Percival Knight and Hassard Short, and Broadway's most prominent actors made up a mob of eight hundred, gradually revealed on the Lexington's huge stage as the lights went up. Seldom have I seen so effective a spectacle arranged without the aid of scenery or costume; and when one reflected that all this was not mere play-acting, but the real thing, coming from the striking actors as a unique way of presenting their side of the issue, the impression made was one not soon forgotten.

As the third week of the strike rounded out, a bombshell was thrown into the Equity camp by the new contract offered to the actors through the recently organized Actors' Fidelity League. This granted even more liberal concessions than the Equity had asked for in the first place—except that it withheld recognition of the Equity. What the managers hoped for by this arrangement was of course that enough members of the Equity would flock over to the standard of the Fidelity to sway the balance in the latter's direction; but as I write there is no evidence of any such stampede.

Ethel Barrymore failed to report for rehearsals of a new comedy by Zoe Akins, to be produced at the Empire Theater, under the auspices of the Charles Frohman Company. The next night she led the Equity ball at the Astor with her uncle, John Drew, who promised to return to the stage as *Sir Peter* to his niece's *Lady Teazle* in a revival of "The School for Scandal," to include John Barrymore as *Charles Surface,* and Lionel as the sleek villain, *Joseph.* Other activities of the Equity are also under way, not only in New York, but elsewhere.

The American Federation of Labor, with the return of its president, Samuel Gompers, from Europe, came out squarely on the Equity's side. The Federation's indorsement insures the support of the stage-hands' and musicians' unions, which closed even Thurston, the magician, on the eve of his appearance at the Globe.

There was much speculation as to whether Charles Dillingham's other house, the Hippodrome, would be permitted to open. The Equity decided that as here twelve performances were given every week, and paid for accordingly, the same as vaudeville acts, there was no infringement of their rights; so the big show was allowed to go on. And big it certainly is, although the title, "Happy Days," would not lead one to expect the really great spectacle one gets after the juvenile portion of the entertainment has been run off.

Certain difficulties over patent rights having been adjusted, the great tank is again in operation, and one can see the marching maidens step intrepidly beneath the waters, which close over their heads without giving a sign of the safety zones into which, of course, they disappear. Over and above this marvel, which must be particularly impressive to those who have never seen it before, there are a number of diving girls, including one who makes her plunge into the tank from the Hippodrome's loftiest reaches, so that if you have a seat down in front you may need a mackintosh to protect you from the flying spray.

Nor is the real circus element lacking this time, for Poodles Hanneford is on hand with the only stunts in the ring I care about looking at—I mean those done with a comedy tinge. I have never seen the equal of this young man, who appears able to fly to a galloping horse's back from any direction and stick there as if it were a magnet that drew and held him. Two particularly effective numbers are achieved by directly opposite means—one "The Hall of Colors," in which marching actors are combined with block effects in scenery with fetching results—the other a mere invitation to the audience to sing the old songs thrown on the screen, as was done on the New Amsterdam roof a season or so ago, to a banjo accompaniment.

I have not mentioned the bookstore, a novel fashion of introducing costumes of every period of the world's history, nor Bert Levy, who is back again with his unique one-minute sketches, nor Powers's elephants in new stunts, nor a dozen other acts which go to make up the best bill, as a whole, I have ever seen at the Hippodrome. I had written that it was fortunate this was so, with not a single theater on Broadway open in August's closing week, when ordinarily there would be at least twenty competing for patronage, when the stage-hands at the Hippodrome suddenly walked out in sympathy with the Equity, thus closing the city's biggest playhouse. The difficulty was adjusted, however, through the voluntary

FAIRE BINNEY, SISTER OF CONSTANCE BINNEY, AN INGÉNUE IN THE NEW PLAY BY RACHEL CROTHERS, "HE AND SHE"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

ARLEEN HACKETT, ONE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN THE NOVELTY PLAY, "A VOICE IN THE DARK"

From a photograph by White, New York

resignation of Mr. Dillingham, who felt that his membership in the Managers' Producing Association was the cause of the trouble, and who gallantly laid himself on the altar of sacrifice so that salaries should not be lost to the hundreds of Hippodrome employees. Thus, after only a brief eclipse, "Happy Days" dawned again.

Meanwhile the strike had spread to Washington and Boston, with the prospect that the entire country would be affected. Then, after the conflict had lasted four weeks and a day, as astounding a finish was reached as any audience could demand in a drama. For, following upon all the personal bickerings, harsh words, and virulent threats, at a meeting held at the Hotel St. Regis, lasting from Friday evening, September 5, until the early hours of Saturday morning, an agreement was concluded which was hailed with satisfaction, and even jubilation, by all parties—the managers, the Equity Association, the Fidelity League, and the American Federation of Labor. Can you imagine anything more extraordinary?

The settlement was brought about mainly through the efforts of that clever playwright, Augustus Thomas, representing the new association of stage writers, who contrived to bring both sides of the controversy face to face for the first time during the fracas. Mr. Thomas achieved a remarkable diplomatic feat, and deserves every one's gratitude. The Equity members have won recognition of their association and the granting of all their demands, with a minimum pay for the chorus of thirty dollars a

week in New York and thirty-five dollars on the road; the managers are delivered from the threatened bugbear of a " closed shop," and the Fidelity League is acknowledged as a permanent organization.

Furthermore, there is to be no black-list against anybody, all lawsuits are to be discontinued, and all disputes are to be settled by an arbitration committee of three, one of whom is to be chosen by the actors, another by the managers, and the third by both jointly. The whole agreement is made for a period of five years, ending with the close of the theatrical season in June, 1924, and the actors, stage-hands, and musicians have agreed not to go out on any sympathetic strike meanwhile.

Thus was brought to a close the most disastrous interruption of theater traffic in the history of the stage. The money lost to the amusement world must have run up into millions of dollars, and one cannot add, as I did in my account of the flu's ravages last January, " due to no fault of its own." But bygones are now happily bygones. No one is going to point a finger at any person or persons who may have been responsible for starting that month of unhappy memories. Rather will all join in acclaiming the skilled diplomatist from Missouri who was instrumental in ending it.

NEW SHOWS WITH A RUSH

After a month of enforced inactivity, the New York theaters resumed business more speedily than one would have considered possible, taking into account the causes that interrupted their traffic. In striking contrast to the three houses that were operating on Friday night, September 5, by the following Wednesday twenty-five were open for business, with fresh *premières* scheduled for almost every evening.

The first new piece was " Up from Nowhere," by Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson, with Norman Trevor as the self-styled " new American " of Portuguese extraction, possessed of a big fortune made in the shipping business and of an utter disregard for the conventions. In trying to convince his son that a certain blue-blooded daughter of an ancient race is seeking to marry him for his money, he falls in love with her himself, and after four very tedious acts, including much bad acting by a mostly incompetent cast, succeeds in carrying off the prize. The play needs cutting of the most drastic description; and although Mr. Trevor is an undeniable artist in all he does, it seems a pity that the management placed an Englishman in a rôle that one cannot help feeling would have been more convincing in the hands of some native-born player—Richard Bennett, for instance.

It is a pleasure to record that the first score for the freshly started season was achieved by the new producer and playwrights to whom I have already alluded as falling victims to the strike on the very evening of their proposed Broadway opening. This was only a farce, with the weak title of " Nightie Night," but with a story and a speed so infectiously humorous that one has little hesitation in predicting for it a lengthy career. And, praise be, there is no bedroom taint therein.

The piece was written by two women, Martha M. Stanley and Adelaide Matthews, and was presented by Adolph Klauber, for several years dramatic critic of the New York *Times*, and more recently associated with the Selwyns in management. Not only does his selection of " Nightie Night " indicate that he knows what is likely to entertain audiences, but he has pitched on just the sort of people to act it, from Francis Byrne as the innocent husband who finds a former flame installed as a tenant of his apartment, to Grant Mills as the well-meaning brother-in-law who puts the unlucky real-estate deal through.

Grace George has returned to the stage after a year's absence, but in a vehicle so frail that I doubt whether it holds together long enough to be compared with this comment. And more's the pity, not only because the leading character fitted Miss George to delightful perfection, but light comedies are so seldom come by that the failure of one tends more than ever to the discouragement of writers who might otherwise essay others, perhaps with success.

" She Would and She Did " was written by Mark Reed, a young man from Illinois, who took Professor Baker's well-known course at Harvard, went to war, and returned to find that his first play had been accepted. It is delicate in plot to the texture of thistledown, revolving wholly around the efforts of *Frances Nesmith* to reinstate herself in the golf-club from which she has been suspended for sixty days owing to a display of temper that moved her to damage the green with her mashie. The first act is charming to a degree, the second lets

MARY MILES MINTER, STAR IN THE MOVIES WITH THE REALART PICTURES CORPORATION, HER LATEST RELEASE BEING "ANNE OF THE GREEN GABLES"

From a photograph by Monroe

FRANCINE LARRIMORE, AS SHE APPEARS IN THE THIRD ACT OF THE SPOKEN PLAY SENSATION, "SCANDAL"

From her latest photograph by Lewis-Smith, Chicago

down considerably, and the last is hopelessly amateurish.

But young Mr. Reed—he looks a mere boy — need not be discouraged. It is only once in a blue moon that a first play wins out. I recall distinctly the sad failures of initial efforts by Avery Hopwood and Roi Cooper Megrue, to name only a couple. To make three acts out of an episode that must inevitably seem so unimportant to most audiences would be a *tour de force* for a playwright with years of practise. That he did well enough to attract the notice of so clever an artist as Miss George, and to hold the attention of his public for at least half the evening, is evidence sufficient that he has in him the makings of a writer in a dramatic field less diligently tilled than any other.

The new season is already prolific in offering the work of new writers. Another neophyte represented is Ralph E. Dyar, with "A Voice in the Dark," an addition to the many murder mysteries that audiences have recently been asked to ferret out, if they can, before the final curtain falls. This time actual novelty of presentation enters into the game, for one scene shows us in pantomime what a deaf woman is supposed to hear, while another reveals what a blind man hears.

Of course, this is mere theatrical trickery, and the story arranged to set it forth has been built in a rather labored fashion; but the tricks themselves are most effectively worked out by means of a cast of excellent quality. Florine Arnold is corking as the irritable deaf woman, and Arleen Hackett plays in just the right key as her nurse. For the rest, there are Olive Wyndham, Anne Sutherland, William B. Mack, and William Boyd, and some good work is contributed by a young newcomer, Stewart Wilson.

Broadway has seen "Scandal," and has followed the example of London's West End and Chicago's Loop by succumbing to its frank sex lure. Written so poorly that one can scarcely credit its author with being the same Cosmo Hamilton who gave us "The Blindness of Virtue," the fascination of Francine Larrimore, who enacts the self-willed heroine, is to my mind its

DORIS KENYON, LEADING WOMAN IN "THE GIRL IN THE LIMOUSINE," ONE OF THE MANY NEW FARCES

From a photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

only redeeming feature. Formerly in farce —" Some Baby," " Double Exposure," " Parlor, Bedroom and Bath," to mention three of them—and more recently in " Some Time," a musical comedy, Miss Larrimore steps into the emotional ranks without tearing passion to tatters. She and Charles Cherry are starred in " Scandal," which, brought out at the Thirty-Ninth Street Theater on September 12, will probably run straight through the season, judging by the crush at the opening performances.

Its story is that of a fashionable girl thirsting for adventure. Going unattended to a portrait-painter's rooms, for the mere lark of it, she is discovered there by her family, and to save the present she borrows trouble from the future by declaring that she is secretly married to a man who lives across the hall—a man whom her people had been anxious to have her wed.

When he threatens to claim his rights, she is terribly angry, and then, when he has completely cowed her by his masculine masterfulness, he leaves her with the assertion that she possesses for him not the faintest possible appeal. Thus those who have been lured to see the piece through its reputed " daring " nature, are cheated of whatever they expected to behold.

Nobody is told just what happens next, for in the last act a month has elapsed, and we see the couple on a pretended honeymoon, the family still being unaware that they are not married. The convenances, however, are carefully observed, and the two, though deeply in love with each other, put as much distance between them as a large mansion will provide. The movie clinch, of course, is as inevitable as ten minutes to eleven, when it occurs—which reminds me that " Scandal " has already been seen in the films, so that the posters are forced to proclaim the present version as a " spoken play."

A cheering sign of the freshly started season was a loose-leaf announcement in the program of the Longacre Theater stating that the management, in cooperation with Comstock & Gest, producers, desired to secure for that house a standing as the home of high comedy. If this project succeeds, it will give New York one place of amusement where playgoers can be sure of the type of entertainment they will find there, just as they were in the old days of Wallack's and Daly's.

An auspicious beginning has been made with "Adam and Eva," a comedy of American home life by Guy Bolton and George Middleton. There is a hint of " A Successful Calamity " in the theme of the piece, but the treatment is wholly different, and I congratulate Messrs. Comstock & Gest for not having been frightened off from a predestined success by this slight resemblance to another play in which a rich man worked out his family's redemption by a pretended loss of fortune. In " Adam and Eva " he doesn't do this himself. It is done for him by a young man, the manager of his business, whom he installs in his place at home as father of the family while he himself takes a three months' trip to his rubber-plantations up the Amazon. Here was another opportunity for less courageous managers to say:

" Piffle! What audience will swallow an improbability of that sort?"

But big houses do swallow it every night, with great enjoyment in the process, and will probably continue to do so throughout the theatrical year, for the piece is brightly written and capitally acted. Otto Kruger is *Adam,* the business manager aforesaid, and Ruth Shepley *Eva,* one of the rich man's daughters, who cannot decide between two suitors, so compromises on a third—*Adam,* of course. Very fine is Ferdinand Gottschalk as *Uncle Horace,* who has come on a week-end visit and remained for fifteen years. He, too, is transformed into a hustling business man by the sounding of the go-to-work tocsin, all quite in the " Turn to the Right " manner—than which nothing seems to be surer-fire with the American public just now. But " Adam and Eva" is written on a much higher plane than the usual offering of this type, really justifying its classification as the high-comedy inauguration of the Longacre's new policy.

WHAT " JOHN FERGUSON " DID

The business of producing plays is what might be considered an extra hazardous calling. This is largely due to the fact that managers have no standard by which to determine the correctness of their judgment on any particular piece that may be offered for their inspection. The last shred of any confidence they may have had in themselves must surely have vanished when they witnessed the success of " John Ferguson," a play that almost every one of the regular Broadway producers had turned

FAY BAINTER, LEADING WOMAN IN "EAST IS WEST," THE PLAY THAT SHARES WITH "LIGHTNIN'" AND "JOHN FERGUSON" THE DISTINCTION OF RUNNING FROM ONE SEASON INTO THE NEXT ON BROADWAY

From her latest photograph by Alfred Cheney Johnston, New York

down for what to them all seemed the strongest possible reason. For was it not a tragedy, without the redeeming note of a romantic setting or a melodramatic mystery that might set the audience guessing? Nevertheless, when the Theater Guild put it on for a week, last April, its reception was the astounding event of the spring season, and as I write, after mid-September, the piece is still running.

The play is in every way deserving of its success, which reflects credit on a public capable of discerning real merit in drama and acting. Slow-moving as the piece is in its one setting, there is no denying the strength with which it holds one.

Light Verse

IT HAPPENS TO EVERYBODY

WHEN, after a series of sickening thuds, my
second-hand motor broke down,
I towed it about—while my money held out—to
every garage-man in town.
Each freely admitted that something was wrong—
they dazed me with technical patter,
And all of the lot asked for cash on the spot, but
differed on what was the matter.
One said that the carbon had choked up the gears,
one claimed that new cams were essential;
Another insisted the spark-plugs had twisted and
messed up the left differential.
They each took a hack at the engine in turn, and
when the last fellow had done
The machine was all right; yet, try hard as I
might, I couldn't persuade it to run.
Bereft of my money and short of my hopes, as
the immobile wreck I surveyed,
I thought it a shame that the men in that game
should all be such dubs at their trade.

A year or two later my vitals went wrong. My
breakfast-food wouldn't digest;
I suffered from aches and from tremors and
quakes; I had shivery chills in my chest.
From doctor to doctor I went for relief. Each
seemed very pleased to assure me
That the outlook was bad, but each of them had
a different dope that would cure me.
One said that my thorax was stuck to my lungs,
and told me that both must come out;
One said that my tongue wasn't properly hung;
another declared I had gout.
"Your spine is too long and your eyes focus
wrong," one specialist said with a sigh;
While a second was sure that there wasn't a cure,
and gave me a fortnight to die.
Now, after two months upon diets and pills and
mud baths and mustard massages,
I think a lot more than I used to of yore of the
fellows who run the garages!

Gus M. Teitelbaum

A BACHELOR TO THE SMOKE OF HIS CIGARETTE

WHIRL aloft, curl aloft,
Up toward the rafter;
You are my answer to
Now and hereafter.

Swirl along, twirl along,
Light as a bubble;
You are my laughter at
Life and its trouble.

Flow ahead, blow ahead,
Mocking ambition;
You are my challenge to
Time and tradition.
Hie away, fly away,
Taunting me, only
Keep me from feeling so
Utterly lonely!

Elias Lieberman

TRUTH

HOW interesting it would be
To stop with some good family
In whose household all were constrained
To speak the truth, and truth obtained!

Truth is a thing by all admired;
And—one could leave if one desired!

Ada Munsell

THE ROYAL PUMPKIN

OH, golden daughter of the sun,
Thou callest forth a pæan!
How ignorant the scornful bards
Who class thee as plebeian—
A "common vegetable," in fact,
A product of the garden!
Forsooth, such dullards ought to sue
To win thy gracious pardon!

On far-off India's sunny slopes
The gods first saw thee sleeping—
A simple thing in Lincoln green,
And scarcely worth the keeping;
But deep within thine humble heart
They saw thee truly pious,
A creature willing to be led,
And free from crook or bias.

And swiftly o'er the raging seas
The gods, like winsome charmers,
Beguiled and coaxed thee to the land
That bred New England farmers,
And shed the sunshine and the frost
That wooed thee from thy sadness,
To make thee big and plump and sweet,
A golden sphere of gladness!

And then they brought thee to the dame
Who ruled the Yankee kitchen;
She decked thee in thy royal robes
And made thee most bewitching.
With spices and with sugared sweets,
A mystic, rare creation,
And set thee on thy pastry throne,
The idol of a nation!

Charles Irvin Junkin

A HARD SUM

MY hair owns up to forty,
My mouth to thirty-five,
My eyes perhaps to thirty;
But how can I contrive
To act up to their level
When I have in my heart
A spirit aged just twenty
That will not yet depart?

Anne Coe Mitchell

THE OPTIMIST

THERE was a poet poor who had
The grim wolf at his door.
He did not like the hungry look
The creature always wore.
In vain could he the wolf evade;
By night as well as day
The hungry monster stood on guard,
And would not go away.

But notwithstanding this stern plight,
The poet seemed content.
I marveled at his unconcern,
And asked him what it meant.
Said he: "The thing looks bad, I know.
To that I quite agree;
And yet I fear no bite because
I've tamed the wolf, you see!"

Blanche Elizabeth Wade

THE GREAT CITY'S SPELL

THE city was strange, and he knew not its ways;
They were out of his range, and he moved in a daze.

He felt all ajog in the midst of the crowd,
With its clamor of voices so raucous and loud.

He mingled aghast in the scurrying rush;
The world seemed a chaos of hurry and crush.

He was all out of gear in the stress and the press;
But he soon found some cheer in the girls and their dress;

And ere long—why, he liked it! He wished to remain!
"I'll go see my folks, then I'll come back again."
And now he's plunged in without ever a worry,
And he, too, is part of the town and its hurry!

Carol Purse

TWEEDLEDUM AND TWEEDLEDEE

I AM enthralled by Sylvia's smiles;
I am enslaved by Laura's wiles.
If Sylvia speaks, I dream of brooks
That sing through shady woodland nooks.
If it is Laura's voice I hear,
I think of thrush-notes lyric-clear.
I'm in a parlous case, you see,
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

I am enmeshed by Sylvia's hair,
And Laura's locks are like a snare.
On Sylvia's cheeks there shows the rose;
On Laura's there are sunset glows.
While Sylvia's eyes are heavenly blue,
Yet Laura's are celestial, too.
So you will sense I'm all at sea
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

I ponder what fate has in store
For such a luckless bachelor.
My lot is desperate, unless
Another pities my distress—
Some girl still more adorable
Than those who hold me in their spell—
Some peerless girl who'll rescue me
From Tweedledum and Tweedledee!

Clinton Scollard

DARING

YOUR blowing hair, your dainty air,
Your lips—a pair of roses rare;
You are so wonderfully fair—
And yet I do not dare!
A bird up in the tree above
Is singing of his happy love.
You have no right to be so fair,
Unless I dare—
So there!

Herbert Webster

TO STELLA

LEST other folks should carry tales,
I'm willing to admit
I'm not one of the meekest males;
I've carried on a bit!

I've loved the ladies, dark and fair,
The kind who dance and sing,
The frivolous and debonair;
In short, I've had my fling!

But pray believe me when I say
That sort of thing is past;
'Tis not first love I offer—nay,
But, better far, 'tis last!

Harold Seton

The Business of Those Boys

BY ED CAHN

Illustrated by M. Leone Bracker

MOE SIMIS and his friend Sam Baum watched the world go by on the seaside board walk and discussed their personal affairs.

"Listen, Moe; all we got to do is get a little more capital. We're young yet; we're smart like tacks, which everybody tells us. We got a good idea, and when opportunity knocks at our door—"

Sam showed his even, white teeth in a smile.

"Say, Moe, if opportunity should once be such a foolisher as to knock on your door, he could right then make his will, for you'd hug him to death."

"No, Sam; give me credit—I'd tie a string to him. Say, look who's coming, all decorated up!"

"I see them. *Oi, oi,* with a shine on the shoes! A cane each! New hats; new suits; three-dollar ties, bought two for five dollars, maybe. Such a wealthy look; such a gorgeousness! Hello, Kink Solomon!" he called to the glorious ones. "What did you do with the kveens from Sheba?"

The approaching elegants did not wait until they quite arrived to answer.

"We're going to meet them here."

They smiled like sunflowers in the sunshine as sundry heads in the passing multitude turned to see where that loud voice came from.

"You two fellers sure do believe in advertising, don'tcha, Harry?" Sam Baum remarked.

Mr. Meyer accepted what he considered a compliment.

"Sure—make the public rubber! That's our motter—ain't it, Joe?"

Mr. Lesser took out a case that glittered like gold and extracted a cigarette therefrom. Sam and Moe, who hadn't had a smoke for twenty minutes, got all ready to help themselves with thanks; but the cigarette-case disappeared into Mr. Lesser's pocket, and he borrowed a match from Sam with which to light up.

"I got only a few matches left," he observed as he tossed the burned one away and took a long inhalation with every appearance of enjoyment.

Mr. Meyer, who was already smoking, laughed with huge appreciation.

"Ain't Joe the saving guy, though? He'll wind up with a fortune yet."

Sam Baum's voice was acrid.

"He maybe might, but it would be other people's money. By the way, how's the auction business coming, boys?"

"Better than what your business is, I betcha, for it's been so good that we could retire right now if we wanted to."

"*Oi,* what a killing you must have made some place! So you are now pluteykrats, hey? And you have bought the clothes right off some song-and-dance team," Moe scoffed, in the unbelieving tone of a man who wishes to serve notice that it is useless to attempt to cast dirt in his eyes.

A wide grin of triumph overspread the rather foxy countenances of Messrs. Lesser and Meyer.

"We," said Mr. Meyer in the same impressive voice in which he was wont to auction a sixty-cent fire-gilt watch-chain for the pitiful sum of four dollars—"we are going to marry money."

"Barrels of money," supplemented Mr. Lesser.

"Aw, go on!" snorted Sam. "In the first place I don't believe it, and in the second place no girls with money would know you two fakers—unless maybe they was counterfeiters' daughters."

The other pair ignored this, smiling as much as to say:

"We knew it would make you crazy with jealousy, but wait until you hear the rest."

Mr. Meyer flicked the ash from his cigarette onto Moe Simis's coat-sleeve.

"Yes, we ain't slow plodders like you two. We made a pile of money since we went partners in the jewelry auction business, and now we're going partners in something else. It's the two Polsky sisters we're marrying. Mr. Polsky, he is retired. He was once a big dealer in antiques. And you know them guys—they gotta have adding-machines to count their mazuma. The girls is extra fine—peaches—elegant and swell, and each has got a education like a college professor."

Sam and Moe signified their opinion of this story by holding their noses as if in the presence of ancient eggs.

"Honestly, I'm telling you the pure truth," protested Mr. Meyer.

"Aw, these here fellows wouldn't believe the truth if they told it themselves," said Mr. Lesser, and pulled out his watch. "Let them stick around a minute or two more and see for themselves how Mr. and Mrs. Polsky and Miss Rhea and Miss Hattie Polsky will meet us here to keep the date we made with them to take them to the Casino for dinner. Lettum see for themselves if they is swell or if they ain't."

"Lots of things is swell and still they ain't kosher," remarked Sam.

"Look here, then. Watch us, we ask you—look!"

A little wizen man with a long, brown beard, wearing very new clothes and a tall silk hat; an enormously fat lady in black silk, displaying about a quart of yellow diamonds; and two of the prettiest girls that Moe and Sam had ever seen, were approaching.

"There they are," gloated the auctioneers. "Don't they look like money in the bank? Don't they look strictly kosher? Rhea, the little girl, is Lesser's, and I'm going to marry Hattie."

"All settled a'ready, huh?" Moe asked jealously.

"Just as good. Well, g'-by!" They advanced to meet the smiling Polskys, with their hats in their hands and the light of the electrics shining on their sleek black hair.

"Looks like they were welcome, all right," observed Sam. "Let's walk over closer, Moe. Gee, ain't that little one a peacherino?"

"Quick, let's butt in and make them introduce us."

But Mr. Lesser saw them coming, and got the party instantly under way.

"Yow, Sam, already I found out something. Them low-livers is scared to have the Polskys talk to us."

"Sure they are, for they got a conscience on them like a garbage-tin. I betcha them Polskys haven't got a idea what a blood-sucking couple leeches they're knowing so friendly."

Moe sighed.

"Ain't it a hard, cruel woild, Sam? A couple honest boys like us could work like a galleyful of slaves all their lives and hardly make nothing, while a pair burglars like Lesser and Meyer marries a lot of capital what could by rights only belong to respectable men, and besides gets thrown in extra nice girls!"

Sam nodded mournfully.

"The way this woild is run is a howling crime. But all we need is a little more money yet to make good, anyway. Wifes," he added, "is only a extra."

Sam's eyes followed the retreating Rhea hungrily, however.

"Yes, but them Polsky girls are nice; anybody could see it. Also terribly pretty. I like the tall one with the auburn curls the best—and Hattie is my favorite name, too."

"All right, Moe, I'm satisfied—because I like Rhea the most. We ought to get us such a pair ladies. They would be a expense, but—"

His voice trailed away in thought. They began to stroll in the direction that the Polsky party had taken, and their busy brains began to scheme.

"Moe, I like the looks of the Polsky girls."

"Yes, they look good to me; and papa's got money, them porch-climbers said."

"Oh, that don't make it so; but he looks kinda like it, anyway."

"Meyer is a no-good, and Lesser is the same, only woise; so, Sam, there's only one thing for us to do."

"I get you, Moe. We gotta cut them out, in case they accidentally told the truth, and are going to marry the girls. Also because they are a couple of swell-dressed bums that's all right maybe at a fake auction, but got no right with ladies."

"Sure! Now, first, we get a rating on Polsky, and find out if he really is a retired antiquer."

II

THEY hurried their steps and were in time to see the party vanish into the

HATTIE WAS POLITE ABOUT IT, BUT THERE WAS AN UNMISTAKABLE EFFORT TO REMAIN UPON A FORMAL FOOTING

Casino restaurant. There was a veranda encircling the room, and they walked around it until they found a window where they could peer in unobserved. They saw the Polsky party seated close to the open casement; heard the dulcet tones of the young ladies' voices; heard Joe Lesser order a most impressive meal—and turned away, the certain victims of Cupid's arrows and filled with a determination to stop at nothing.

They spoke to the head waiter, and found that the family was known to him.

"They're newly rich," he said with lofty tolerance, "but not so bad as some. They're living at one of the beach hotels 'count of the old lady—too blame fat or something. Those birds with them have the reputation of bein' buzzards, but you never can tell. They are learnin' them things. Why, when they started to come in here first, Mrs. Polsky up and asked me in a voice you could have heard from here to the car-barns what the asparagus-holders was for. But they're learning. They've got to where they can look a hole through a waiter, though every time Polsky wants a hassock for his game foot he calls it either a what-zis or a casserole."

"We heard that the girls are engaged to those fellers."

"Thasso? Well, they are still at the 'miss' and 'mister' stage around here. It's my opinion the girls don't like 'em, but they've got ma razzle-dazzled, and she's trying to crowd them down the girls' very necks."

The friends went away, found seats in

the shadow where they could watch the Casino door, and gave themselves up to earnest thought.

Just when they were convinced that their quarry must have died and been interred indoors, the Polskys and the auctioneers came out again. Sam and Moe flattened themselves against their inconspicuous bench and pricked up their ears after the manner of the most alert of jack-rabbits.

Mr. Lesser was proposing an automobile ride on the hard-packed sand just above the surf line. Mr. Meyer was strong for a dance at the pier pavilion.

The watchers were sure that the girls were not keen for either. They were very polite about it, but there was an unmistakable effort to remain upon a formal footing with these young men who by look and tender smile, by florid, admiring phrases, tried every instant to storm their citadel.

Mr. Polsky looked tired and a little bewildered, as if he wished for nothing but a chance to retire from the public gaze and remove his collar and shoes.

Mama Polsky had an overfed, bilious look. She turned yellow at the thought of a ride, and yet it was plain that she did not wish to let these stylish young suitors slip out of her fingers.

"Listen, Mr. Meyer," she interrupted the excuses of Rhea. "Papa and me ain't so well to-night—getting old, you know. We couldn't stand this high-lifing. We go back by our hotel, and you and Mr. Lesser should take the girls to the dancing."

This was greeted by loud cries of approval from the swains, a swift, appealing look for mercy from Hattie, and a gusty sigh of relief from papa. In vain the dutiful Rhea tried to persuade her mother that she needed her ministrations.

"No, go by the pavilion, my children; have the good time while you are young. Wait until you are married to stay home." This with a crafty, sidelong look at Joe Lesser that made Sam Baum fairly grind his envious teeth.

"Be home at eleven thoity sharp," said Papa Polsky as they parted.

Moe and Sam promptly fell in behind those wonderful girls, grimly determined to have an eye upon the doings of that pair of sinfully fortunate auctioneers. They could by no means approve of the proprietorial manner in which Lesser and Meyer took possession of the young ladies' arms, and inferred from the rigid spinal columns of the owners thereof that it was not enjoyed.

In the pavilion they stood well back in the fringe of onlookers, watching them dance—filled with delight at the ladies' grace; with disgust at the forward manners of their partners; with a burning ambition to interfere and rearrange things.

At the end of half an hour Sam could endure it no longer.

"Come along, Moe, let's go jump off the end of the dock. For us there's no luck and no hope. There ain't such a thing as love with first sight, but I've got it and got it terrible. If only I could have that little Rhea, I wouldn't care for even so much money as is in the mint!"

"Don't get a fainting heart, Sam. Look how hard them low-livers are working to get a smile. The girls have got no use for them—ain't that something?"

"A little something," agreed Sam, "but not much. Look at who the Polskys are, Moe, and look at us. O' course, we're honest, but *muhulla* compared to them."

Moe refused to be overwhelmed.

"Remember about the sparrowgrass-holders and the casserole for the old man's feet. He was poor wunst, and he might have a heart in him yet."

Sam clutched his arm excitedly.

"Look at your Hattie! How mad she looks at Joe and how he's hugging her! My golly, what a gall the feller's got! Why don't she bawl him out for it?"

Moe turned pale with wrath, but answered calmly enough:

"How could she—her being a lady? Say, there's the Cohen girls over there. Let's ask them to dance with us. That way we can get close to them *ganevim*. We'll bump into them. The girls will see that we are nice guys, and we will keep so close to them all the time that we will make them introduce us, anyway."

"Go ahead, go ahead!" agreed Moe excitedly.

They descended upon the astonished Misses Cohen, whirled them off, and inside of five minutes more had executed the maneuver.

The music stopped as they apologized. The girls smiled all around; there were general introductions. But, best of all, a pair of clear gray eyes under a crown of auburn hair told Sam frankly that she liked

him on sight; a pair of sober brown eyes broke into a laugh as they flashed the same message to Moe. Meyer and Lesser, none too well pleased, still found temper to flirt instantly with the flattered Misses Cohen.

A multitude of clapping hands won their point. The orchestra-leader took down the

THEY FORGOT THAT TO-MORROW WAS ANOTHER DAY AND THAT DUTY WOULD CALL

" no encore " sign, lifted his baton, and they were off again.

Things happened quickly then, while the music throbbed happily over the sound of hundreds of dancing feet, and the gentle waves spent themselves with a whispering sound on the dark sand beneath them.

Hattie and Rhea followed the friends with approving glances. Once Rhea smiled faintly at Sam, and Hattie's fair cheek glowed under Moe's open admiration. The girls knew that the two young men were keeping close to them, and the knowledge seemed like a protection to them from the too-eager ardor of their partners.

After a while they expressed a desire to skip a dance and rest, and they were aware, though their cavaliers were not, that Sam and Moe had heard. Mr. Lesser suggested a walk on the pier in the moonlight, and the girls agreed.

The Misses Cohen thereupon found themselves returned to the seats they had occupied among the wall-flowers, for Sam and Moe stepped out into the moonlight, too.

Discreetly they pussyfooted in the background while the quartet ahead of them passed through the brief shadows thrown by closed booths into vivid patches of moonlight. The Lesser and Meyer voices were lowered from their usual stridency to an amorous hush. It was plain they were making love while the moon shone. The girls' chatter had an increasingly nervous note.

Suddenly there were two little screams in quick succession, followed by the sounds

of two hands brought sharply against impudent faces.

"They're trying to kiss them! Here's our chance!"

Moe and Sam leaped forward. The Misses Polsky, much perturbed, stepped from shadow to light, their escorts half a step behind them with hands held to smarting cheeks.

"Loafers! Fresh mugs!" cried the chums.

Each of them landed on the point of his enemy's chin with skill and considerable force. Two offenders bit the dust, and two arms were politely offered to the rescued ladies. There was a burst of excited chatter on both sides, to which nobody listened.

"Let's get off this pier and have a little dance together," suggested Moe.

They did, and if their doom needed sealing that did it. Moe fell so deep in love that there was never to be any falling out for him. Sam surrendered to Hattie without a struggle. They forgot that there was such a thing in the world as capital; forgot that they might have killed two rascally auctioneers and been compelled to stand trial for murder; that to-morrow was another day, and that duty would call. All they knew was that the ocean sang softly, the music played; that two youthful figures obeyed their every guidance; that two pairs of eyes looked up at them and said:

"I like you."

"I'm glad you found me."

"I'm so happy I could die!"

III

In no time the big clock over the door pointed to eleven.

"We've got to go!"

Brought back to earth, the boys cast an uneasy glance in the direction from which two temporarily vanquished rivals might arrive with a tremendous thirst for vengeance. They ransomed wraps from the check-room bandit and got safely away from the big, glaring doorway without a challenge from the surrounding darkness.

"We are staying at the Carolina, just down the beach," said Hattie Polsky.

"We'll see you home all safe and sound; but first, how about a little supper in the Carolina grill-room?"

The girls gasped with delight at the idea. They knew they'd love it. They guessed, however, that they had better not. They exchanged half-guilty, half-frightened glances. It was easily to be seen that they were afraid of what mama would say about the affair as it stood, and did not dare any more.

"Aw, come on! It 'll be all right. Only a sandwidge and a cup coffee, ladies!" urged Sam.

"Anything in the place that you could fancy to eat or to drink," cried Moe, with a sly kick at the stingy-sounding one.

"Sure, sure—anything! Expense is with us simply nothing. Honestly and truly, I was only thinking of the time."

"Oh, if you are in a hurry, Mr. Baum," teased Rhea.

A little more hesitation, a little more persuasion, and it was agreed. After all, what harm, since they were staying at the Carolina? They would have refreshments in the grill, after which the boys would help them explain to Papa and Mama Polsky, who would be pacing their private parlor waiting up for them.

No expense was spared. Moe attended to the ordering, and if there was one thing that Moe did well it was to arrange a perfect combination of viands. It was great fun getting better acquainted; the minutes fled like the splinters of seconds, and in no time it was midnight. Hattie and Rhea sprang up like twin *Cinderellas* at the first stroke. The waiter was hastily summoned and tipped in a manner to make him bow. They scurried into an elevator as if they feared it would turn into a pumpkin every instant. They shot up to the ninth floor and stood trembling before suite 916.

Mama Polsky opened the door, and there is no denying that the first ten minutes were awkward, but they passed.

Papa, in a yellow velvet dressing-gown, came out of his sleepy bad humor.

"Vell, vell, it looks to me like there ain't no harm done, mutter. You take the girls to bed. I talk me by these young fellers a while."

"Good night; we had a swell time. Papa, you ask them to call!"

"*Koosch!*" said the mother, and shooed them away before her.

Mr. Polsky gazed sharply at his guests.

"Vell, Mr. Simis and Mr. Baum, you bring me safe home mine leedle goils. I tenk you. You tell me Mr. Lesser and dot other feller are no-accounts—such a fake auctioneers. Also that they get fresh with mine daughters the first time I turn me my beck. Already I had me my idees

about them, but what I want to know now is—excuse me—who are yous?"

Sam and Moe glanced at each other and smiled modestly.

The old man went on.

"I could see that you are fine-looking, hendsome, stylish-dressed young fellers. I just hear from my goils that you are swell dancers and could buy a fine supper in a grill mit hold-up prices. But what business are you in?"

Sam took the floor.

"Well, listen, Mr. Polsky, we are not rich yet. We are only young fellers with a little money saved up. We got a little property—a nice ranch."

"Rench? What for kind of a rench? Cows? Meats?"

"No, Mr. Polsky, chicken and squabs for the fine-restaurant trade; also eggs. We're chicken-ranchers."

"Oh, I see!" Mr. Polsky pulled at a reflective lip with thumb and finger.

"Only in a small way," interposed Moe. "Don't get the idea, Mr. Polsky, that we are wealthy, exactly. We got to add to our capital to get going right."

"A chicken-rench? Vat a business!"

From the tone it was to be inferred that the father of Hattie and Rhea did not think much of their prospects. The mention of capital, too, seemed to have withered his heart and sewed up his mouth like a pocket.

"Yes, it's a great business with a great future," Sam went on cheerily. "We begin small, but we end big. We get exclusive contracts from the big hotels and cafés. We ship all over the country. After a while we have our own poultry-cars with our name, Simis & Baum, in poiple paint on every one."

"But, y'unnerstand, Mr. Polsky," Moe cut in again, "we don't like to talk about ourselves. Much nicer that you hear who we are from somebody else. Mr. Al Frankel, a friend of ours, could call on you and tell you all about us."

"Yes, Mr. Polsky, he could show you our bank-books and the deed to our ranch if you want to see them. Ask him anything you want."

They got up and reached for their hats. Polsky chuckled.

"You are great boys, I could easy see that. Is this who-zis, Mr. Frankie, maybe a schatchen, a marriage-broker?" He smiled, as if he guessed that his girls were the object of all this.

"Only wunst in a while, maybe, but mostly a lawyer. A fine feller, Al is. You could rest easy if you give him any business, Mr. Polsky. We could recommend him. Well, good night, Mr. Polsky, we wouldn't keep you out of bed any longer."

The old man shrugged.

"The night's gone, anyhow. You could send your friend if you want to." He held out his hand. "Come see us to-morrow evening."

"To-morrow evening, Mr. Polsky, we got a important business engagement, but the next night—"

"All right, all right — come see us the next night."

He flapped his hands wearily and yawned until the boys thought that the big gap in the brown beard could never be closed. They found themselves outside the door and ringing for the elevator.

IV

It was nearly morning when, back in the city, they routed out one Al Frankel—who from motives of economy slept in his office—and told him the situation.

"All right, I gotcha," said Frankel. "I call on Mr. Polsky to-morrow afternoon without fail. I tell him you are honest, sober, industrious boys from orthodox people in the old country. I give him an idea of your bank-accounts in good round figures—the rounder the better. I explain how fine that ranch is. I say offhand that anybody what's far-sighted enough to put capital into the thing will double his money and no risk; but if he shies off, I say you ain't looking for help, that you're going to swing it yourselves, that you are only now in town looking around for some incubators cheap. I make him see you are just the kind of ambitious boys to be calling on his girls. That the dope?"

"Poifect!"

Moe thought that it might be well if Rhea and Hattie could hear all this, and Mr. Frankel promised to see that they did. They said good night, and departed, but Sam had an afterthought, and went and hammered Frankel up again.

"Listen, Al—don't lettum get the idea we're advertising ourselves."

"Gee, no!" answered Frankel with great gravity.

"That press-agent stuff makes me tired, anyway," observed Moe. "Don't forget to make it good and strong how we're only

MAMA POLSKY OPENED THE DOOR, AND THERE IS NO DENYING THAT THE FIRST TEN MINUTES WERE AWKWARD

young fellers, but fierce ambitious, and bound to climb up in the world."

"Sure!"

"Say, let us know if the girls hear the spiel, will you, Al?"

"All right! Look for me about eight. I'll go by, and if I nod twice it means that they did. If I lift my hat it means that I only saw the old man."

Once more they parted, and the two boys finally rolled into bed well content with the night's work and pleased with future prospects, though back in their minds lurked the conviction that they were not finished with Messrs. Lesser and Meyer.

V

THE next evening—the evening sacred to the important business engagement of Moe and Sam—there were two tables reserved by a big window overlooking the sidewalk, in Golden's Café de Luxe. One was a small one with two chairs, the other with four. They were the end tables of adjoining groups constituting the charge of two waiters, and were so close that conversation between them would be very easy.

As the head waiter put the cards marked "reserved" in place on them, he remarked to the interested waiters that the reservation had just come in by telephone; that the man ordering the tables had asked particularly that Nos. 20 and 22 should serve them, and that the connection was broken before he got the names.

The waiters designated by those numbers looked carefully to linen and silver and stood ready.

In a few minutes the head waiter ushered two men to the smaller table. They both wore a pale look of determination over a slightly battered aspect, but their manner was easy to the point of carelessness.

Their waiter stepped up and filled their water-glasses, while his colleague stood by, arms correctly folded, his side towel on his arm and an alert gleam in his watchful eye.

The newcomers did not glance at their serving-man as they ordered a modest meal and unfolded their evening papers. Their waiter's brows shot up to his hair. He seemed about to speak, but, thinking better of it, hustled off kitchenward as a good waiter should.

When he returned, with his high-piled tray held aloft on practised fingers, he saw that the other reserved table was being claimed. As he arrived and set down his burden, he noticed that his customers were sitting back like spectators at a play, a malicious expression of triumph upon their faces, their eyes fixed upon the unhappy waiter who was seating the newcomers.

"Good evening, Mr. and Mrs. Polsky," called the two diners to the newcomers.

The retired dealer in antiques and his lady started, frowned, and nodded frigidly. Their daughters lifted disdainful chins and looked away; but the neighboring pair were not in the least discouraged.

"We told you that you would be sorry for not listening to what we had to tell you. We found out that you were going to be here to-night, and so we had these tables reserved. It ain't because you are so famous that the head waiter called you by name, Polsky—it's because we had it all fixed. How do you like our waiters?"

The Polsky optics turned upon their serving men, and, while Mr. Lesser and Mr. Meyer gave way to a cackle of revengeful mirth, Sam Baum and Moe Simis stood discovered in their waiters' aprons! Stripped of their camouflage, they were plain toilers who had dared to woo the moneyed Polsky maidens; worse, to entertain them in public! Servants masquerading as masters of lavish supper-money and dancers of fashion!

It was a humiliating moment for Sam and Moe; they looked sick and they felt sick.

Papa Polsky sat staring with dropped jaw. Mama turned scarlet and flung one barbed word at them:

"Fakers!"

Rhea was white, but she spoke.

"We never dreamed we'd see you here, Mr. Simis, but—but—good evening!"

She spoke defiantly; but Hattie, after one frozen look at Sam Baum, cast down her eyes and closed her pallid lips tight.

It was not much comfort to see Al Frankel pass close to the window and nod twice to signify that the Polsky girls had heard his little speech about his clients. They would think that it was the veriest pack of lies.

Papa Polsky recovered his voice with a gulp.

"Aha, so this here is your chicken-farm, huh? A fine kittle from fish! A couple fictioneers yous are, and *schnorrers* besides. Bah, wit yous!"

But Sam and Moe were not going to go under without a fight. They let their enemies laugh; then they spoke up bravely.

"No, Mr. Polsky—everything we said was truth, only we didn't tell everything. We ain't beggars. We got the ranch and money saved; we're only working here to get a little more money together. We were going to quit next week."

The old man gave them a long, soul-searching look, at the end of which his eye softened a trifle.

"Vell! Don't talk to me any more; couldn't you see it only makes the hyeeners laugh? Embarrassed like this I never thought I would be. Lookit, everybody is rubbering at us instead of paying attention to their foods."

He flung a libelous look at the other table and picked up a menu upside down.

"Go ahead, kvick; bring us roast chicken all the way round and some green stuffs—salad wit' a full line vegetibbles. Whatcha think we oughta have? You're a vaiter; you should know better than I do what we want."

"Waiter, get a move on you!" cackled the harsh voices of Lesser and Meyer.

Coming out of his petrification of horror, Sam banged their dinner down before the revengeful pair, with murder in his eye and black despair in his heart. Then he fled in the wake of Moe, who was making for the merciful concealment of the kitchen as fast as he could.

VI

THEY encountered authority on the other side of the door, and begged so hard for

instant relief from duty that it was granted to them.

"Anyway, Rhea stood by me. She spoke nice to me, no matter how they laughed. She's one fine girl! She's one genuwine sport! But we hadn't oughta tried to keep it dark we was waiters, Moe. We didn't have the right to put them in such a position. No, sir, we never!"

But Moe had no ears for such talk.

"Hattie Polsky turns me down because I'm a waiter, huh? Won't speak to me 'cause I got a apron on and a pair of low-living get-rich-quicks gives us the ha-ha; ashamed before a pair of boiglers that she's been out with a working man! I tell you, Sam, I'm surprised at her. I thought she had in her a heart. I thought to myself she had sense!" He pulled off his apron and stuck it under his arm. "Here's where I quit and show her a thing or two!"

"Same here also," said Sam, and did likewise. "Anyhow, Moe, we ought to be in business for ourselves, and I got to show Rhea that she's right to stick by me. I ain't the kind of guy what stays a waiter always."

The head waiter sought them out.

"It's all right this time; I got your places filled; but don't you pull any more of this stuff. Say, Moe, here's a card the red-haired girl borried off her father; she told me to be sure to give it to you."

On the face of the card which Moe seized so eagerly was set forth in English the intelligence that B. Polsky was a wholesale buyer of old iron, bottles, rags, and factory waste; that it would be well to patronize him, since he paid the best prices. Meyer had not been so very inaccurate when he had said that his intended father-in-law was a dealer in antiques, Moe reflected, as he turned the card over.

There he read in the quaint characters in which the holy books are written, and which protected the message from the curious head waiter's eyes:

DEAR MR. SIMIS:

There is a sale of incubators at the city mart to-morrow. Good luck and bargains.

Faithfully,

HATTIE POLSKY.

"Well"—and a heavenly smile overspread Moe's face—"she didn't throw me down after all! Come on, Sam, let's get this here ranch a going, and then we'll go pay that call. I betcha the first incubator we buy against a glass egg that we marry into that antiquer family yet!"

FAR-AWAY HILLS ARE GREEN

EVERY lass her lad has won—
I must be choosing now, they say;
But choice from out my power has gone
Within an hour, within a day.

Colin, he goes in broadcloth clad,
Jock tills his fields with honest care;
The old folks think with either lad
I would have gold and gear to spare.

But to my father's door there came
A fiddler with his viol and bow,
A light-foot lad with lips of flame,
And my heart broke to see him go!

He played, "Hills far away are green—"
His black eyes beckoned, "Come wi' me!"
I dreamed of lands I'd never seen
And of a home I'd never see.

His light feet tread the way they list,
But still I hear the song he plays,
And dreams of a love that I have missed
Go with me all my days.

Edna Valentine Trapnell

The Wild Fawn*

A WIFE WHO BROUGHT GAY PARIS TO QUIET DIXIE LAND

By Mary Imlay Taylor

Author of "Who Pays?" "Children of Passion," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. L. LAMBDIN

THE news that their son William is bringing a bride home from France is a shock to Mr. and Mrs. Carter, who, with two other sons and a daughter, live in an old-fashioned Southern town. Their lame son, Daniel, is especially perturbed, because he knows that William was engaged to a town girl, Virginia Denbigh.

William and his bride, Fanchon, arrive. Fanchon proves to be a charming young French girl who wears daring gowns, speaks English with a delightful accent, and shocks the whole community with her cigarette-smoking and general disregard of Southern conventions.

Invited by Virginia Denbigh, who is too proud to exhibit her hurt, to sing at a church concert, Fanchon, after a disturbing interview with a sinister-looking stranger named Corwin, whom she had evidently known in the past, not only sings, but actually dances in the church in a manner that almost stupefied her ultraconservative audience. A motion-picture magnate named Bernstein thereupon offers her a lucrative contract, which her husband indignantly refuses to consider.

William Carter, weakening under the criticism directed at his wife, goes to his first love, Virginia Denbigh, for sympathy, and gets very little of it. He learns with a shock that his brother Daniel has helped the Denbighs to save their beautiful old home from the hands of creditors, and has thereby earned Virginia's heartfelt gratitude.

Meanwhile Fanchon is growing more and more bitter toward all the Carter family except the boy and girl, Leigh and Emily.

"You're awfully good people," she says bitterly to Daniel. "*Mon Dieu*, I'd rather meet some bad ones—who'd let me alone!"

XI

FANCHON did not go up-stairs. She flung herself face downward on the lounge in the library and writhed there, beating the old silk cushions with her small, furious fists. In the bitterness of her heart she thought she hated them all, every Carter who was ever born! Because she was so angry, so wilfully hurt, she had wreaked her vengeance upon Daniel. She had told him a falsehood, and now, thinking of it, she tore at the cushions and wept hot tears.

She had no idea why she had done it. She hated Virginia Denbigh, because she knew the Carters loved Virginia. They had wanted William to marry her, and she believed they were making William hate his wife. She believed it from the bottom of her soul. But why had she struck at Daniel?

Perhaps it was because he was William's brother; perhaps it was because Fanchon had divined that he loved Virginia.

Virginia, with her calm, lovely face, had become a nightmare to Fanchon. She quarreled with her husband, and she goaded and teased him, because the Carters did not like her, because their attitude was so superior. Then she laid it all to Virginia!

Fanchon had done nothing lately but quarrel with William. He had objected to Corwin, had forbidden her to have him at the house. Fanchon, who feared Corwin, might have rejoiced had she not resented her husband's tone. He had been set on, she thought, by Mr. Carter.

Since that fatal dance Mr. Carter had been coldly civil. He hadn't considered it his duty to scold his daughter-in-law, but he snubbed her. Fanchon, carrying her head high, had nevertheless been cut to the heart by it. She loved admiration, she loved applause, she lived on excitement, and she had none of these things, unless she counted

* *Copyright, 1919, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the September number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

the admiration of Leigh and Emily—two children, as she thought scornfully, who didn't know any better!

As she lay there on the old lounge, strange, ancestral passions stirred in her, wild impulses of rage and melancholy. She had had a bitter time. The very place was whites of her eyes when she looked at her, as if she was watching something strange and outlandish.

"I might be a Fiji Islander, from the way they look at me!" Fanchon sobbed angrily, staring about the old room with its familiar, guttered armchairs, its littered

AS SHE LAY THERE ON THE OLD LOUNGE, STRANGE, ANCESTRAL PASSIONS STIRRED IN HER, WILD IMPULSES OF RAGE AND MELANCHOLY

intolerable; she hated it, and she knew that the place hated her. The stodgy, monotonous domestic life—she had to face that, too—three meals a day with the Carters!

If they had liked her, if they had even made her welcome and forgiven her unconventional ways, it might have been different, she thought; but now she hated them. She knew that Mrs. Carter had seen her in the church lane with Corwin. Mrs. Carter had no idea of the quarrel she had with Corwin, or her fear of him, but she must think ill of her and run home to tattle about it!

Fanchon sat on the old lounge and dashed hot tears from her eyes. She pictured herself sitting at the luncheon-table with the family. She could see them! Mr. Carter and William would not be at home; but there would be Leigh, making moon eyes, a sentimental boy, and Emily with her white eyelashes and her honest, snub-nosed face, and Mrs. Carter, her fair hair fading in ugly streaks, and her absence of eyebrows. Daniel, too, his dark, handsome head bent and his eyes indifferent—he had never liked her! Even Miranda, moving around cumbersomely with the dishes, would show the library-table—where Mr. Carter's pipe lay beside his accustomed place — and at the dull, ancestral Carter over the mantelpiece.

The portrait filled the latest Carter bride with a kind of fury. She rose from the lounge and went and stared at it.

"Ugly old thing!" she cried angrily. "You'd hate me, if you could!"

She felt a sudden sensation of suffocation. The place was too small for her; she couldn't breathe in it. She went to the window and leaned out, staring blankly at the peaceful scene. The Carter house was well on the outskirts of the town, and she could glimpse a distant meadow where a spotted cow moved placidly. A few red chickens crossed her vision, picking in the grass. A colored maid in the next house was pinning some clothes on the line. Down the quiet street an ice-cart trundled its sober, dripping way. It was quiet again when the sound of wheels receded; then suddenly a rooster crowed. He crowed tremendously in a fine, deep bass.

"*Mon Dieu!*" cried Fanchon.

She drew back from the intolerable prospect, and heard Miranda setting the table

for luncheon. The faint jingle of glasses and the occasional rattle of china warned her. The domestic meal was approaching with its unfailing regularity. She could not bear it. She ran out of the room, and had one foot already on the lowest step of the stairs, when the door opened and Leigh came in.

"Fanchon!" he cried eagerly, his boyish face flushing to the hair.

An imp of perversity stopped her. She stood balanced, one hand on the banisters, looking back over her shoulder. There was at least one Carter she could manage, and she knew it. Those fawn eyes softened and glowed.

"Leigh!" she responded softly. "*Mon brave garçon!*"

He put his books down and came toward her with shining eyes.

"Oh, Fanchon, what mites of feet you've got!" he exclaimed, looking at the foot that she was displaying on the step. "I never saw a foot as small as that."

She smiled.

"You think so, *chéri?*"

She moved the small foot a bit, looking down at it, pensive, aware that he could see also the charming sweep of those dark lashes. Leigh, long since subjugated, dropped on one knee beside the lowest step.

"If I were a prince, I'd follow that shoe," he laughed up at her, his boyish eyes adoring. "I've read some French about a lady's feet—in a novel. It fits your feet, Fanchon." He blushed. "I'm not sure I pronounce very well, but it was this: '*Petits pieds si adorés!*'"

For a moment her lips trembled, half mirthful, half tearful. She leaned toward him and stroked his hair caressingly, her light, soft fingers thrilling him.

"*Je t'adore, mon Leigh!*" she whispered.

Then she laughed elfishly, put one of her slender fingers on her lip and ran up-stairs like a whirlwind.

Leigh slipped out of her mind in an instant. She did not even see the adoring look that followed her. She was bent on escaping that stodgy family meal, and she was in hot haste. She had thought of a way to evade it—to evade them all for a while.

She was fond of riding on horseback, and William had taken her out on several occasions. He would have taken her more frequently if her modish habit had not shocked the sobriety of the old-fashioned town. It had been made in Paris, and it had startled the streets through which they rode. After one or two experiences William had quietly let the rides drop. Fanchon knew why he had done so, and it made her angry. To-day she thought of it again, and she longed for the fresh air in her face and the swift gallop. Even the stupid country roads were tolerable for the sake of that.

She went to her closet and dragged out the famous breeches and riding-coat. She was putting on the stylish leggings when Miranda knocked.

"Please, ma'am, Miz Carter, she say ain't you-all comin' down t' luncheon? De chops is gettin' cold."

"I don't want any luncheon," Fanchon called to her without opening the door. "Say that I've got a headache."

She heard Miranda retreating heavily; then she slipped on her riding-habit, found her hat, and, opening the door softly, stole down-stairs. She could hear Mrs. Carter talking to Daniel in a hesitating voice, and she heard Leigh answer something. She did not want them to talk to her. She could not bear it. She opened the door gently, slipped out, and started almost at a run for the livery-stable where she knew William had hired the horses.

Mr. Carter had lunched down-town. He did so when he was very busy, and he was on his way back to his office when he encountered Judge Jessup. The judge halted him and shook hands.

"Dan's won the case!" he said with elation. "Why weren't you in court to hear your son plead, Carter?"

Mr. Carter reddened a little. He had been thinking of William and William's wife, and this was a keen relief. He relaxed.

"I was busy. How did the boy get on, judge?"

The judge clapped his big hand on his old friend's shoulder.

"Carter, he's going to be a great lawyer! I'm as proud of him as if I'd hatched him myself."

"Poor Dan!" Mr. Carter's face softened while his eyes smiled. "He ought to have something to make up—I hate to see him so lame!"

"Nonsense! It doesn't hurt his brains, man!" Jessup exclaimed hotly. "He only limps a little. He's the smartest boy you have, Carter."

Mr. Carter smiled broadly.

"Think so? I wouldn't like to say that.

William's done well, Payson tells me; he said so a month or two ago. They're all pleased with the way he handled things abroad."

"Eh?" the judge cocked a humorous eyebrow. "I thought the most William did over there was—to get married!"

Mr. Carter met his eye, faltered, and groaned. The judge laughed.

"You don't appreciate Dan. Now, as I was saying—"

He stopped with his mouth open. A horse came down the main street at a hard gallop. There was a distinct sensation. The drivers of passing vehicles sat sidewise; a string of little half-dressed piccaninnies streamed along the edge of the sidewalk in eager but hopeless pursuit. A street-car that had stopped at the crossing failed to go on because conductor and motorman were gaping after the vision.

Riding cross-saddle, in the latest extreme of fashion, was young Mrs. William Carter. The apparition would have startled them at any time, but the lady was already famous, and her progress might be viewed somewhat in the light of a Roman triumph.

Very pale, her dark eyes shining and her lips compressed, Fanchon struck her steed sharply with her riding-crop. The horse, a spirited young bay, came on at a gallop, with the clatter of maddened hoofs, followed by the stream of pursuing children and their wild shouts of applause. In this fashion Fanchon dashed past Judge Jessup and Mr. Carter and disappeared in a cloud of dust on the highroad.

A comet could scarcely have had a more startling effect. Mr. Carter said nothing, but his color became apoplectic. He stared after her for a minute, and then, with a set face, he turned to the judge.

"What were you saying? Oh, I remember—yes, yes, I'll come in to-morrow and hear Dan address the jury," he said hastily.

The judge smiled grimly.

"The verdict was reached to-day, Johnson. You're a bit behindhand." As he spoke he held out his hand. "Congratulations on Dan," he said heartily. "I'm in a hurry. Want to walk back to my office with me?"

"No!" said Mr. Carter.

He knew what Jessup thought, he suspected him of shaking with suppressed laughter, but the judge looked innocent enough. They shook hands again absently, having forgotten that they had done so twice already, and Mr. Carter strode away. He knew that he was stared at, and he walked fast, his face still deeply red. At the door of his office—he was in the insurance business—he found his office-boy gaping down the street.

Mr. Carter stopped short.

"Here, you! Go into that office!" he said sharply. "What are you doing out there, you young ninny? You'll be picked up for a street-corner loafer if you don't mind your own business better!"

The alarmed youth retreated before him, apologizing. Mr. Carter, with his hat still on, strode past the clerks in the outer office, went into his own room, and slammed the door with such force that the glass rattled.

One of the young stenographers looked up from her work and laughed silently at the other.

"Seen his daughter-in-law?" she inquired in a whisper.

The other girl nodded.

"She's awfully pretty and swell, anyway," she murmured. "Oh, my—Minnie, look!"

Across the street was the old road-house where William and his wife had supped after the dance. As Mr. Carter's stenographer looked out now she saw a hastily saddled horse led to the door. A tall man came out and swung himself into the saddle. It was Corwin.

The two girls across the street rose silently and leaned over their machines to watch him. He rode well, turning his horse around, starting at a quick trot, and breaking almost at once into a gallop.

"He's gone after her, Minnie!"

Minnie nodded; then, hearing a noise in the inner room, they dropped into their places and worked furiously. Mr. Carter opened the door, looked in, and closed it sharply again. They heard him return to his desk.

Minnie pulled her companion's sleeve.

"He saw him!" she whispered.

The other girl assented, touching her lips with her finger. They could hear earthquakelike sounds within, and they rattled away at their typewriters, demurely silent; but through the open window they could see, far in the distance, the furious horseman disappearing down the turnpike.

His horse was a powerful animal, a far better traveler than the young bay that had carried Fanchon. The two girls in the office speculated in silence, and worked

rapturously. Young Mrs. Carter was the most exciting thing in a dull town at a dull time of the year, and they were grateful to her.

Mr. Carter kept them late that day and worked them hard. Usually an easy task-master, he called them in during the afternoon and gave them page after page of dictation. It was half past six when he slammed down the top of his desk, locked it, and went home.

He walked, and it was a long way. It was seven o'clock when he opened the front door with his latch-key.

The family were already at dinner—all but William, who was walking up and down the hall, looking haggard. Mr. Carter came in and hung his hat upon the rack.

"Waiting for any one?" he asked his son dryly.

William raised his head.

"Yes, Fanchon. She hasn't come in yet. I'm expecting her any moment."

"You needn't," his father retorted grimly. "She's out riding with that fellow—Caraffi's manager."

William said nothing, but he stopped short. Mr. Carter, after eying him for an instant, went on into the dining-room. His wife, Daniel, Emily, and Leigh were sitting around the table, eating the second course disconsolately.

"I thought you'd never come—and we were hungry," Mrs. Carter said apologetically. "Miranda, go and get the soup for Mr. Carter. I had it kept hot," she added, glancing anxiously toward the hall door.

They could hear William walking to and fro again. As Miranda disappeared for the soup, Mr. Carter looked up. He glanced at his wife meaningly.

"She's out riding with that man," he said in an undertone.

"Johnson!"

His wife's dismay only brought a grim smile to Carter's face. He unfolded his napkin without further comment. Before Miranda returned with the soup-tureen, Mrs. Carter rallied sufficiently to lean over and murmur across the table:

"I've got a lot to tell you—that dreadful girl was with that man this morning—behind the Methodist Church! I saw—"

She stopped, for Leigh had risen suddenly. He flung his napkin on the table and stalked out of the room with a white face. Mr. Carter stared after him.

"What the—" he began.

Emily touched his hand warningly. Miranda was returning.

"Leigh's awfully mashed on Fanchon," Emily whispered irrelevantly, returning to her dinner.

Mr. Carter shut his mouth hard, and the conversation languished. Daniel spoke once about the weather, and his father nodded.

"Judge Jessup handed out a lot of compliments for you to-day, Dan," he remembered suddenly.

Mrs. Carter looked pleased, but even this fell flat. They could hear William's tramp continuing after Leigh went up-stairs. Mr. Carter rose once and went to the door.

"Aren't you coming in to eat your dinner, William?" he demanded.

"I've dined," William replied shortly.

"Then I think you'd better go into the library and sit down," said his father meaningly.

William, halting in his walk, stared for a moment, puzzled. Then he understood, and a deep red went up to his forehead. Without a word, he turned, went into the library, and shut the door.

Miranda had brought on the dessert, but only Emily and Daniel ate it. There was a heavy silence. Mr. Carter sat moodily, apparently listening, and Mrs. Carter could think of nothing to say. She tried two or three times and stopped, aghast at her own temerity. The three vacant chairs—William's, Fanchon's, and Leigh's—seemed to gape at them. Daniel finally rose.

"I've got to prepare a paper for Judge Jessup," he remarked quietly, and left the room.

They heard him light his cigar and go up-stairs. It was then that Mr. Carter rose also and went as usual into the library. Emily and her mother, left alone, gaped at each other in a startled way. They heard voices in the library, and then a heavy silence, filled with the odor of tobacco. Emily began to be a little frightened.

"Mama, do you suppose she's run away?" she whispered in an awed tone.

Mrs. Carter cast a frightened look toward Miranda's retreating figure, and shook her head.

"I don't know, Emily. Suppose we go and sit in the parlor? I don't think papa wants us in the library."

They spent the evening sitting in the little unused parlor that Fanchon hated. It was full of heavy stuffed furniture and old-fashioned cabinets. Accustomed to a family

gathering in the library, they languished there, watching the clock.

"It's getting awfully late," said Emily finally, after an interminable hour. "Where can she be?"

"Emily," said Mrs. Carter irrelevantly, "I wish you wouldn't say that Leigh is 'mashed' on her. In the first place it's absurd, and in the second it's vulgar."

"But he is," insisted Emily. "He'd get down in the mud and let her walk on him—like Sir Walter Raleigh's cloak. He says so."

"Nonsense!" Mrs. Carter, trembling with nervousness, discovered that it was half past ten. "You go to bed," she ordered shortly.

After her daughter went up-stairs, she sat for a long time, waiting. She was puzzled by the silence in the library. From time to time she went to the window and looked out anxiously; yet she had no real hope that her daughter-in-law would appear. She felt sure that Fanchon had run away, and the disgrace of it made her face burn. She turned the gas down and sat in semidarkness, ashamed to look at her own image in the long mirror between the window.

The Carters had always had such good wives, such loyal, faithful women. She had not failed herself, she had done her best, and William, her first-born, the pride of her heart—must he be disgraced?

She sat there watching and listening until nearly twelve o'clock. Still she heard occasional sounds from the library. Finally, worn out, she crept up-stairs to her room; but even there she continued to listen and tremble at intervals.

At last she heard the sounds of locking up the house and her husband's heavy step on the stairs.

Mr. Carter came into the room and slammed the door. His wife had crept hastily into bed, and she lay there, shivering a little with dread.

"What did you say to him, papa?"

"Say? Not a blamed word!" Mr. Carter sat down and pulled off his boots, flinging one down with violence. "I guess I don't have to say anything," he remarked grimly. "I reckon the fool's got about enough. Marrying a French ballet-dancer!"

Mrs. Carter drew a long breath.

"Where do you s'pose she is, Johnson?"

"How do I know? He'll have to get a divorce—that's as plain as the nose on your face. Then I suppose the donkey 'll want to marry Rosamond Silvertree, or Bloomie Bloomingkitten, or some other actress."

"Oh, hush!" groaned Mrs. Carter, burying her head in her pillow with a sob. "I can't bear it! Poor Willie!"

Mr. Carter restrained his tongue, but he flung the other boot into the corner with a bang more eloquent than words.

XII

Down in the library William Carter waited alone. He was glad to be alone. Aware of his father's attitude, he had dragged through a fearful evening. Mr. Carter had sat at the table, smoking and reading his newspaper. He had said nothing about the one subject that was uppermost in both minds; but at intervals he had lowered his paper sufficiently to fix a fierce eye on the clock and then to turn it significantly upon his son. Without meeting his glance, William felt it. With the tide of rage and grief rising in his own heart, that hostile eye—which seemed to say, "I told you so!" was intolerable.

He was thankful when his father's stout figure disappeared into the front part of the house. He heard the vigorous locking-up without protest. It was evident that Mr. Carter had decided that Fanchon wouldn't return that night, and he was bound to lock up as usual. In fact, he did it a little more violently than usual. It was an overt act which relieved his feelings. Then, carrying a pitcher of iced water, he went heavily up-stairs, and his son heard the sharp closing of his bedroom door.

It took no very vigorous imagination, either, to fancy his mother's anxious inquiry for the truant, and the subsequent comment on the situation. Even in the solitude of the library William's face burned. He was bewildered, too. He knew that he had reached a crisis, and he did not know how to deal with it. To do anything seemed only to publish his own misery. He had telephoned twice to the livery-stable already, and been assured that Mrs. Carter's horse was still out.

He had no idea where she had gone, and to follow, even in a motor, would be senseless enough. It was a fine night; a full moon lighted the roads. If she meant to return, she could get home so easily that he could not believe she intended to do so.

As for Corwin, William had only seen the man two or three times, and was cognizant of the gossip only through his father. People didn't talk to him.

His father had seen Corwin follow

Fanchon, but had Fanchon planned it all? Or had the man — a hard, coarse-looking brute — pursued her without any invitation, without her consent? William Carter did not know; he only felt a blind rage that he had suddenly been forced to doubt his wife. It was hideous — simply hideous!

A COMET COULD SCARCELY HAVE HAD A MORE STARTLING EFFECT. MR. CARTER SAID NOTHING, BUT HIS COLOR BECAME APOPLECTIC

They had been quarreling lately nearly all the time—petty quarrels. Fanchon evidently hated the place, she seemed to hate even her husband's people, and he had found her becoming wilder and stranger every day. He knew she longed to go back to Paris, or at least to New York; but William had never brought his mind to consider even the possibility that she was disloyal, or could be. He could not believe it now, but he found that the conviction was deep-rooted in his father's mind, and he saw it in his mother's kind, worried eyes.

What had they heard? He did not know—at least he was sure he did not know it all. He saw something of it in Leigh's white face to-night. The boy was fond of Fanchon. William felt relief to think that at least one member of his family liked her.

He watched the clock until the hands indicated midnight. Where could she be? He walked the floor again.

Unobserved, he could give way to his agony of mind. Had there been an accident? Had Fanchon been hurt?

FANCHON'S PROGRESS MIGHT BE VIEWED SOMEWHAT IN THE LIGHT OF A ROMAN TRIUMPH

The suspense was fast becoming a deep and keen agony. He was shaken. He knew that his thoughts had wandered to Virginia, to the peace he might have had. Had Fanchon seen it? Was she tormenting him in a wild fit of jealousy, or—intolerable and monstrous thought!—his wife in flight with a man who looked to him to be no more than a common gamester?

How still it was! Through the open window the soft night air poured in; and now it had a difference, a perceptible quickening, the keenness of the morning. It was nearly one o'clock.

He flung himself into a chair and waited, burying his head in his hands. He tried to think coherently, but he could not. Then a thrill ran through him as the telephone-bell rang at his elbow. He snatched up the receiver. A man's voice called for Mr. William Carter—a gruff, half-drowsy negro voice.

"Yes, yes! What is it?" he questioned.

"De boss tol' me to watch out fo' dat horse Miz Carter hired, suh. I's been up all night—dat horse jes' come in dis minute. He's drippin', an' he ain't got no rider, suh."

William dropped the receiver and stood motionless, as if turned to stone. Good God, how he had wronged her! There had been an accident!

A vision of Fanchon lying by the wayside, her lovely face cold in the moonlight, her helpless, pretty, idle hands flung out, pierced his heart. He groaned aloud. Then his sickened brain cleared and he roused himself. He must get help, hire a motor, and go out to search.

He raised his head sharply. His strained ear caught a sound at the front door. He crossed the room almost at a stride, switched on the light in the hall, threw back his father's elaborate chains and bolts with a shaking hand, and flung the door open. On the threshold, deadly pale and dripping wet, stood his wife.

"Fanchon!"

His first impulse of wild relief was lost in another and a stronger feeling. The look on her face checked the words on his lips.

She came in slowly, reluctantly, putting out a small, groping hand. As the light from the hall lamp fell full upon her, he saw that she had lost her hat, and that her pretty hair clung in wet curls to her forehead. All the gaiety and frivolity of that Parisian habit was gone. It was torn and muddy and wet. But she did not go to him, she did not exclaim that she had been hurt and half drowned. She walked past him, a little unsteadily, and went into the library.

William shut the door and followed her. She had dropped into a chair and lay there, half reclining, her arm across the back and her face hidden on it. Her husband stood looking down at her in silence for a moment; then he turned without a word and went into the dining-room, poured some brandy into a glass, and brought it.

"Drink this!" he said peremptorily.

She lifted the glass slowly, and, without raising her eyes, tasted the liquor and then thrust it aside.

"I know what you think!" she said in a low voice. "It isn't true—I've done nothing—nothing at all!"

His face hardened.

"Why do you say that, Fanchon? I haven't accused you."

She turned with a gesture of impatience.

"I know they have—your father and your mother!"

William, who had taken the glass from her, set it down on the table.

"You're wet through," he said coldly. "Go up-stairs and change. You can talk afterward—if you want to."

"I don't care if I'm wet!" she answered a little wildly. "I'd rather bear wet than your face!"

"I'm sorry my face is so unbearable. I had no thought when I saw you but anxiety. There's been an accident. You haven't even told me whether you're hurt!"

"It wasn't an accident," said Fanchon. "The horse got down in the stream and wallowed. I had to get off to save myself, and when he came out he ran off."

William lifted his eyes reluctantly to hers.

"That horse has just come in, Fanchon. I got a telephone as you came up the porch steps."

She did not seem to grasp the significance of this. She put up a wandering hand and pushed back her damp hair.

"I can't help it!" she said sharply. "It's so—I never would have got here but for a motor. Some people — perfect strangers, too — were coming this way, and they brought me. We came faster than any horse could go."

"Where were you? Where did the horse roll?"

"At Fanshawe's Creek—you know, halfway to the Mountain Inn."

William turned abruptly and walked across the room and back again.

"That wouldn't take an hour and a half for a horse," he remarked dryly. "It's one o'clock, Fanchon."

A flame of red shot up in her white cheeks.

"I think he got into the water at about eleven o'clock. I tried to make him ford

the stream, and he—he just got down and wallowed in the water. I had to get off."

"You went out just after luncheon—while mother was at lunch, in fact—and you were coming home on those lonely roads at eleven o'clock at night, alone?"

She sat up in her chair at that, her flushed face turned fully toward him, and something like a flame kindling in her fawn-like eyes.

"Of course your mother told you!"

"Told me what?"

"About my talk with Corwin in the lane."

William stared at her.

"My mother told me nothing. I didn't mean to tell you, I didn't mean to say anything," he added grimly; "but since you've said so much, I will. I heard from father that Corwin followed you out on the turnpike to-day—to the edification of the town! Was he with you at the creek?"

Fanchon sat quite still, looking at him, her large eyes seeming to grow larger and darker in her white face. He returned the look as steadily, not in anger, but with a kind of grimness new in her experience with him. Neither of them moved, and the stillness in the room was so deep that they both heard the familiar sounds outside. The church clock struck in the distance, and some cocks crowed. The fresh breeze stirred the curtains in the window while the shaded lamp on the table flared up with the little gust. In the flare William saw the misery on his wife's face.

"Fanchon, that man's pursuing you—he's a villain! What has happened? Tell me—I have a right to know!"

Something in his changed tone touched her. She sank back in her chair, covering her face with her hands.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she murmured brokenly, and then, as her emotions swept her away, she burst into wild and uncontrollable weeping, her sobs shaking her from head to foot.

Something in the passion of her tears, and in the crumpled helplessness of the small figure in the chair, touched William in his turn. He stood looking at her without moving, thinking unhappily. He had made a mess of it; but after all it wasn't all her fault. It was his, and he still loved her. From what he had suffered to-night he knew that he loved her. Suddenly he bent over the small, writhing figure and spoke.

"Tell me, Fanchon," he said hoarsely. "Must I thrash that villain?"

Very slowly she raised her head, very slowly and reluctantly she raised her tear-drenched eyes to his.

"I—I didn't go with him, I didn't want to see him—he followed me." She hesitated, trembling. "I don't know how to tell you. He overtook me and he made me come back. I'd lost my way. He made me go back to the inn—we ate dinner together."

"You dined at a public road-house with that man—a man I wouldn't ask to my father's house?"

She nodded, biting her lips.

For a moment he was hot with rage; but he curbed it. He wanted to be just, and he was deeply moved. As she sat there she looked as she had looked once in Paris, when he had first seen her—a butterfly of a creature fighting to live, fighting hopelessly in the midst of glittering, sordid surroundings. He hadn't been blinded, his eyes had been wide open, but he had fallen in love with her; and he had been moved, too, by compassion. He had snatched her out of that gay, hollow sham of a life, and he had meant to save her, to keep her safe. Yet, as she sat there now, she looked forlorn and helpless and beset.

"Fanchon," he said gravely and gently, "tell me why you did this. You didn't mean to do it, you didn't set out to do it—why did you? See, I trust you—I'm asking you to tell me the truth."

"I lost my way." She repeated it as if she had a lesson by rote. "Corwin overtook me and made me turn back. I was hungry, and we ate dinner at the same table—in the public dining-room. Then—then I didn't want him to ride back with me—and I went out of the side door and started alone. When I came to the crossing above Fanshawe's Creek, I didn't know which way to go, and I chose the wrong road. I rode so far that I got frightened. I asked at a house out there—a woman with a queer name—Quantah, I think. I had to come back to the crossing. Then, when I did get to the creek, the horse lay down in the water. I sat and waited, dripping, until a motor picked me up. That's all."

"No," said William, "that's not all. You're afraid of that man, Fanchon!"

"I!" she laughed tremulously. "Why do you think that?"

He was watching her, and he saw her eyes change. He was right. She was afraid of Corwin.

"I don't think it," he said gravely. "I know it. Go on, Fanchon; tell me the rest."

"I have nothing to tell," she replied slowly, deliberately, but with shaking lips. "You—you don't believe me, *n'est-ce-pas?*"

William, looking steadily into her face, made no reply. His changed, white face frightened her. She rose unsteadily to her feet, a forlorn little figure.

"I'm not afraid of Corwin," she said angrily, "not a bit! *Ciel,* why should I be afraid of any one? I ask you that, *mon ami!*"

He still said nothing, his grave eyes on hers. Fanchon returned his look—tried to return it steadily. She had told him a falsehood. She had never been afraid of falsehood; it was an easy way of escape. But now, under his eyes, she flinched. She blushed scarlet, put out a wavering little hand, and tried to catch at his, but he moved away.

"Go up-stairs," he said gravely, without anger, in the remote tone of a man who no longer cared. "You're worn out; you'll take cold. I told you so before. Go up-stairs to bed. Shall I rouse Miranda? Do you need help?"

"Help?" she shivered, but not with cold. "*Non, non!* No help for me—here!"

As she spoke she turned, lifted the discarded glass of brandy to her lips, and drained it. Then, without looking at him again, she left the room.

The light was still on in the hall, but she felt her way to the stairs blindly. She was crying. She had not intended to lie to him, but it was so much easier than to tell the truth. She clung to the banisters for a

"SHE STILL LOVES WILLIAM." DANIEL THOUGHT BITTERLY

moment, sobbing bitterly; then, dashing the tears from her eyes, she went on, aware that he was still standing motionless where she had left him.

As she dragged herself to the head of the stairs, she was suddenly aware of a figure in the upper hall. She stopped and looked around in a panic. She expected her father-in-law, but it was only Leigh.

"Are you safe?" he asked eagerly. "There's been an accident—I knew it! You've been hurt, Fanchon?"

She looked at him in surprise.

"Where were you, Leigh?"

"I've been up all night. I knew William was, too, and I've waited."

He was eighteen, but he looked younger, and his boyish face was white with anxiety. With a sudden impulse, Fanchon laid her hands on his shoulders.

"I'm safe—quite safe, dear boy!" she whispered, and, lifting her pale, beautiful face to his, she kissed him lightly on both cheeks. "Dear Leigh—dear brother!" she murmured. "I shall love you—*toujours!*"

Leigh, unused to being kissed, turned from white to red, but he felt as if he had received an accolade.

XIII

THE only member of the Carter family who left the house with a cheerful face on the following morning was Daniel. There had been practically nothing said at breakfast. Fanchon kept to her room, William briefly explaining the accident at the creek and adding that his wife had a chill. Mrs. Carter went up to see her, but was refused admittance. So was Emily. Mr. Carter read the newspaper more thoroughly than usual, and Leigh ate in a dream.

Daniel, aware of the strained atmosphere, found difficulty in suppressing a smile. He had encountered, at intervals, the expressive whites of Miranda's eyes. She had carried up Fanchon's breakfast, and she knew Job Wills, the hostler at the livery-stable, who had come by in the morning, on his way home after an all-night shift. What Miranda did not know about Mrs. William Carter's ride wasn't worth knowing. Her eyes nearly upset Daniel's gravity; but he finally left the house, feeling a little guilty. It was wrong to find amusement in an incident that seemed so tragic to the others. Daniel therefore suppressed the twinkle in his eyes and set out for Judge Jessup's office.

His way lay through the church lane and down to the lower corner of the main street. It was a way that, at this season of the year, was full of blossoming. It was past time now for the early flowers, but an old-fashioned clustering yellow rose climbed over the Paysons' fence and tossed its fragrance and its falling petals to the passers-by like the confetti at a carnival. A scarlet-hooded woodpecker was climbing the tall trunk of the old oak by the churchyard gate.

Daniel walked slowly. Rapid motion increased his limp, but when he moved in his usual leisurely way his step only halted a little. He was no longer thinking of his own family, nor of the whites of Miranda's eyes. His mind had reverted, as it usually did, to Virginia Denbigh.

He was not startled, therefore, when he saw her standing at the corner of the church. She was not wearing her big hat to-day, but an odd little bonnet-shaped affair that showed her pretty hair and her white forehead, and she was dressed in pink. He thought it was the most lovely shade of pink he had ever seen.

She smiled as she saw him coming.

"I was waiting for you, Dan."

He flushed, and his eyes shone.

"I like that bonnet, Virginia. At first I thought I couldn't like anything but the big hat, but this shows your hair. It's like sunshine to-day."

She laughed.

"My hat was a thousand years old! This is brand-new—I trimmed it."

"I wish I could do anything so well," he said in a tone of real regret. "I couldn't."

"Not even a speech to the jury?"

She laughed a little tremulously. Something in Daniel always touched her. She supposed it was his accident.

"Any one can address a jury," he replied, "but no one but you could trim that bonnet, Virginia."

"If you praise it so much, I shall never take it off." She laughed again, but her eyes grew very grave and kind. "Dan, I heard you speak in court yesterday."

He was startled.

"Really? Where were you, Virginia?"

"Oh, 'way back! I was passing the court-house, and I heard two colored men speak about it. One said: 'Dan Carter, he's makin' a great speech, yessuh, he sho' is. 'Pears like he's got dat jury all bemuzzled!'" Virginia laughed delightedly. "I went in after that. It was so crowded

I thought I'd have to stand, but Mr. Payson was there near the door, and he made some one bring a chair. I could just see the back of your head, Dan, but I heard."

His face glowed now.

"How strange!" he exclaimed in a low voice. "I knew you were there. No, I didn't see you, Virginia. I was speaking, and suddenly—well, I felt that you were there. I remember I half looked around. I thought you'd smiled at me."

She gave him a quick, startled look—a look that seemed to express some new perception of him; but his eyes were averted. He was smiling absently, as if talking to himself.

"I didn't smile, Dan," she said softly. "I was too deeply touched. I don't know why we all felt that way, but we did. Yet when I took your speech to pieces in my mind I found how simple it was. You just told us that man's story, but you told it so simply it went straight to our hearts."

He smiled.

"That's all I can do, Virginia. I'm a simple fellow—I can only tell the simple truth. There's no cause for all this—this fanfare of trumpets in the newspapers, I mean—about my speech. Anybody could do it."

She shook her head.

"Nobody else could do it. That's just it. You're like Lincoln, Dan. They say he thought nothing of the Gettysburg address. I believe he wrote it on his way there. I wish you'd tell me when you're going to speak again. I want to be there; I want to hear you 'bemuzzle' the jury again."

His eyes lit up.

"Will you come? Really?"

"Every time—if you'll tell me. You can phone me, Dan."

He drew a long breath.

"I shall make great speeches, sure enough, if you're there! I couldn't help it. Only I wish you'd sit where I can see you—will you, Virginia?"

She laughed.

"In which hat, Dan?"

He considered a moment.

"The old one, please! When I have dreams about you I see you in that hat."

"I'm afraid it's given you nightmare! I didn't know it was as bad as that!"

She laughed again, a little tremulously. Suddenly she began to see what she had never quite seen before. Poor Daniel cared for her! She was afraid that he cared more than she had dreamed. It touched her so much that her eyes misted.

"Nightmare? Not a bit of it. I tell you what to do, Virginia—when you're through with it let me have it. I'll hang it up over my desk when I want an inspiration. A poor lawyer needs an inspiration. The law's as dry as dust."

She lifted her eyes reluctantly but smilingly to his. She had almost been afraid to meet them, but she was not now. Dan's look was just the same look he had always given her—and she had never understood!

"I'll give it to you for a waste-paper basket," she said gaily.

Then she stopped, her hand on the stone gate-post of the old church. They had been walking slowly through the lane, and Daniel halted, surprised.

"Going in here, Virginia?"

She smiled.

"Yes. There's to be a Sunday-school festival. Besides, they've just cleaned up the church. I took all our prayer-books away for the refurbishing; now I'm going to put them back in the pew."

As she spoke, he glanced down at the armful of books she held. He had been to church with the Denbighs more than once, and he remembered the colonel's big prayer-book and hymnal and the books for their guests. He had used that old red one himself. Then his eye fell upon two smaller ones of brown morocco with Virginia's monogram on the clasp of the case.

"You're still carrying your old set, Virginia," he remarked thoughtfully. Here was a chance for a gift, perhaps. "They're worn at the edges."

She looked down, blushing suddenly.

"Are they? I hadn't noticed."

Something in her tone made Daniel take the books from the pile on her arm. It was a set, prayer-book and hymnal bound in one and prettily mounted. He slipped the clasp and opened them. A faded pansy slipped between the pages. He clasped it hastily and handed it back.

"I thought I knew them," he said hastily.

"Yes?" Virginia's eyes avoided his. Her lips were trembling, he thought. "I've had them a long time. William—your brother—gave them to me when I was just sixteen."

"I wonder," said Daniel, looking up at the old church, "how long ago they planted that English ivy! There's a perfect mantle of it, isn't there?"

"Grandfather says the old rector planted

it—the one who married grandfather and grandmother in this very church."

"I suppose he did as much for my grandparents," said Daniel. "I wonder if they gave him a good fee!"

"Oh, you lawyer!" cried Virginia, and laughed happily.

But Daniel continued to look at the ivy. He had seen her face.

"She still loves William," he thought bitterly.

Virginia, hiding her confusion, began to ascend the old stone steps.

"Why, there's your father!" she exclaimed suddenly. "I didn't know that he often came this way."

Daniel, who was very pale again, looked around.

"He counted on walking down with me, I fancy," he remarked quietly, aware of the thunderstorm in Mr. Carter's face.

Virginia saw it, too, and made haste.

"I'm going in now. Good-by, Daniel, and remember—about that next speech."

He watched her as she went into the old church, stopping at the door to wave a greeting to his father. Framed thus, she made a picture that he kept in his mind all that day and many days thereafter.

"SHE'S GOT ON THE FETCHINGEST COSTUME—FIVE YARDS OF CHIFFON AND FIFTEEN POUNDS OF CRYSTAL SPANGLES. IT'S BEAUTY, CLASSIC BEAUTY, ON THE SCREEN!"

Mr. Carter came up, a little out of breath and very red.

"Going my way, father?"

"I suppose I am!"

Mr. Carter slowed his steps to suit his lame son's gait. He was moody, and he had his morning paper done up like a club in his hand. He slashed viciously at the church snowball as they reached it.

"My Lord, to think of that lovely girl—and what I've got for a daughter-in-law!" he growled.

Daniel, who understood the process of his father's mind without asking any questions, said nothing.

"I've got a nickelette-show, a ballet-dancer, a runaway-with-a-gambler daughter-in-law, that's what I've got!"

They had reached the street now, and Daniel checked him.

"Hush, father!" the young man said gently. "Some one will hear you."

"Hear me?" bawled Mr. Carter. "Hear me? Drat it! D'you suppose the whole town doesn't know? I met Dr. Barbour when I came out of the house just now. He says the Bulls, those new people at the corner of Hill Street, brought her home last night at one o'clock—I mean this morning—in a motor. What d'you suppose they'll say?"

"Perhaps they've got some sense and won't say anything," suggested Daniel, thinking of the prayer-book and Virginia's face.

"They told Barbour, and he'll tell every one—and it isn't twelve hours old."

"We can't do anything, father. Give the girl a chance. William says it was an accident."

"An accident? And your mother saw her flirting with Corwin in the morning!" Mr. Carter could not restrain his ire. "I tell you, Dan, I wouldn't mind so much if William wasn't behaving like a lummox. He won't get a divorce. He told me so this morning."

"Good Heavens, why should he? It isn't as bad as that. She's only a wild girl, and she hates our ways. Why shouldn't she? We've been finding fault with her from the beginning. I don't see why you spoke of a divorce to William."

"Why?" Mr. Carter set his teeth. Then, as they got to the corner, he spoke his mind. "I want him to get a divorce, behave like a gentleman, and marry Virginia Denbigh—if she'll have him."

"I'm sure Virginia wouldn't have him, if he got a divorce to ask her," said Daniel quietly. "She's not that kind of a woman."

"She's in love with him," replied Mr. Carter; "but I don't care for that, either, if I can make the fool shake off this—this wildcat!"

Daniel, who had reached Judge Jessup's door, smiled.

"I'm really sorry for the wildcat," he said quietly. "She's alone, and she hasn't a friend—unless you count Leigh."

"Leigh's a ninny!" Mr. Carter retorted, and went on, still storming, to his office.

But by twelve o'clock he had worked some of his temper off. The process of cooling down began and ended, too, in sympathy for William. After all, it was hardest on William. He had been a donkey, but he had—in common with the other Carters—a natural horror of notoriety for his womenfolks.

Divorce and scandal? Mr. Carter, thinking hard, could not recall a single case in his own family. Of course Uncle Duff Carter had quarreled with his wife, but it was about a back lot that adjoined their place. He wanted to sow it to oats for his horses, and his wife wanted to keep it for a private burial-ground for the family. There hadn't been the least bit of scandal about that quarrel, and it was made up before his uncle died. He was buried, by the way, in that same back lot, with a monument of Florentine marble. His widow had her own way!

As for a runaway wife, or any kind of a wife who wasn't what Mr. Carter called "a lady," there was no record of it. William, his own eldest son and the pride of his heart, seemed about to make the first break in a long line. It must distress William as much as it did his father.

Mr. Carter began to feel the greatest compunction about his son. The boy had behaved like a donkey, but there was no use in crying over spilt milk. The only way was to help him set it right. Of course, if the talk got no farther, and William chose to forgive her and could keep her in hand, there was nothing to be done about it.

As Mr. Carter's rage against Fanchon began to cool, he saw the advantage of suppressing the scandal and making her behave. He had no very clear idea of how this should be done, except his firm belief that any sensible man could prevent such doings in his own household. He belonged,

too, to a type of manhood that has long ago decided on the simplest method to avenge an insult to his family. He couldn't recall an ancestor who under such provocation would fail to shoot his man. Times had changed now, but Mr. Carter felt an intense desire to annihilate that brute, Corwin.

He had no intention of mentioning this to William. The cooling off process had reached the stage of common sense; but he felt that he must talk things over with his son. He had experience of life, if he had no experience with a recalcitrant wife, and he wanted to suggest some kind of restraint for his daughter-in-law. It seemed to him a perfectly practical thing—because he had never tried it. A moral strait-jacket for Fanchon appealed to his mind, at the moment, more strongly than any other idea in life.

He got through the morning's work, lunched alone, and then waited until three o'clock. At that time he could endure it no longer. He had caught his two girl stenographers whispering, and he had seen the office-boy watching the inn opposite, where Corwin had stayed the day before. The office-boy brought Mr. Carter's resolution to a head. He closed his desk sharply, snatched up his hat, and started for William's office.

The office was situated on the top floor of the Payson Building. William was the buyer and traveling agent of Mr. Payson's chain of department-stores. There was only a modest branch store in the home town, but in larger cities there were towering beehives bearing the name of Payson.

William had traveled abroad for these stores, and now, in his private office here, he was still directing the foreign correspondence of the firm. It was a position of great responsibility, and it carried a handsome salary and perquisites. Mr. Carter was proud of his son's advance and proud of his ability to keep up with it. It was his pride in him that made this unfortunate marriage such a bitter disappointment.

He passed through the crowded shop, glancing at the long aisles of merchandise and noting the rugs—some of them brought from Turkey by William, others imported by his advice to be sent to the larger markets in the North. At the elevator Mr. Carter encountered Mr. Payson—the rich man who had paid for the singers at the concert where Fanchon had made herself notorious.

"I'm going up to see my son a moment," said Mr. Carter, as they shook hands.

Payson nodded, but he did not repeat his commendation of William. Instead, he looked rather odd and spoke about the weather.

"Fine for the crops," he said; "but we need more rain."

Mr. Carter assented. He felt uneasy. There was something odd in Payson's manner. The magnate got off at the second floor, and the elevator continued its ascent. At the top Mr. Carter got out and hurried to his son's door. As no one answered his knock, he opened it and went in.

It was a good-sized office, furnished in accordance with Mr. Payson's ideas of business—that is, in the latest and most solid fashion. On a table in the center of the room stood a bottle and a glass, and William Carter was stretched in a chair beside it, lying half on the table, his head down, sound asleep.

Mr. Carter stood aghast. He could see the haggard profile and the dark rings under the closed eyes. Worn out with his heart-breaking night vigil, William had fallen asleep; but his father felt that he was looking on the wreck of his son's life, that William, in his misery, had sought oblivion in the old and time-honored way.

XIV

Leigh Carter had attained the dignity of his eighteenth birthday a few days before the arrival of his brother's bride. He had done fairly well at the high school, and was preparing now, during vacation, for a preliminary examination for the university which had educated the male Carters for generations.

Leigh had some mental gifts and a taste for poetry, which seemed to indicate a literary career, and his fond mother regarded him as a budding genius. There was a wide gap in age between the two younger and the two older Carters, occasioned by the death of three intervening children, and Mrs. Carter's affections had always centered on her baby boy, as she still called Leigh—to his great indignation. Her pride had been in William, her sympathy for poor Dan, but her doting fondness was for Leigh.

Mr. Carter did not approve of it. He had warned her more than once that she couldn't bring up anything but an incubator chicken in that way and make a success of it.

Leigh wasn't exactly a success. The latent manhood in him had scarcely stirred. He was a tall, lanky youth with a handsome, boyish face and the eyes of a girl. He had been a dreamer, too, and had spent much time in reading romances from the newsstands; but he was a good boy, he had cultivated no vices, and "milksop" was the worst charge that other youths of his set could make against him.

He had reached the impressionable age without falling deeply in love, and his mind and heart happened to be in a peculiarly receptive state when Fanchon suddenly burst upon his vision. Her beauty, the subtle charm and mystery of those fawn-like eyes, and her caressing voice, captured his youthful fancy. He could understand why William loved her, and he became at once her slave and worshiper. Then, when he saw the attitude of the family revealed in pitiless criticism, he became her still more devoted champion. Fanchon saw it, and she coaxed the boy into still deeper infatuation.

UNKNOWN TO MRS. CARTER, HER SON WAS ABOUT TO ACT A MAN'S GREAT PART, TO AVENGE THE HONOR OF THE FAMILY

It was her triumph to secure at least one ally in a hostile family, and she used him as a buffer. She always had a kind word for Leigh, a soft pat of the hand, an errand which she conferred as a favor. Leigh, immersed in romantic visions, saw her as the loveliest and most persecuted of beings, and he was ready to give battle to the entire family in her behalf. As Emily expressed it, he would have made himself into Sir Walter Raleigh's cloak for Fanchon to tread upon.

The storm that had followed upon her disappearance on horseback had beaten upon Leigh's nerves. He had lashed himself into a dumb fury in the solitude of his room because his father and mother dared to doubt his paragon, and William, her husband, merely sat and waited for her to come back. William's supineness was the last straw. Leigh had been in a frenzy when Fanchon finally returned, and the meeting on the stairs and her soft kiss of gratitude had gone to his head. He had refused to join a game of baseball that afternoon because he wanted to go home and complete a poem to his sister-in-law.

Fanchon had sent him on an errand to the nearest chemist. She had given him a prescription for some headache powders, she said, and Leigh did not know that he was returning with a peculiarly effective preparation of "bloom" that she usually applied at night. He carried the package with something of the air and feeling with which *Sir Lancelot* might have worn the colors of *Elaine*.

It happened that his way led him past a corner of the main street, where Mr. Bernstein had just made special arrangements for showing Rosamond Silvertree's feature pictures at the little local theater. Mr. Bernstein himself, in a new plaid suit with a diamond scarf-pin, was viewing a poster of Rosamond in the effective, if rather startling, costume of "A Belle from Borneo." He had encountered Leigh on one or two previous occasions, and knew him to be the youngest son of Johnson Carter. As the boy approached, looking a little pale from his night's vigil, Mr. Bernstein eyed him shrewdly.

"Looks like a regular moon-calf," he thought; "but I guess he's got gumption enough to take a warnin' to the rest of 'em. Hello, young man!" he called out. "Been in to see this picture? Greatest picture on the screen! There's a matinée to-day and two showings to-night."

Leigh shook his head, stopping to gaze in some amazement at the highly colored portrait of the fair Rosamond.

"Gee!" he remarked. "She's fat!"

"Fat?" Mr. Bernstein blew his cheeks out and stared at him with a kindling eye. "Fat, boy? Why, she's superb! That's Rosamond Silvertree, the most beautiful star on the screen!"

Leigh giggled. He giggled like a girl, a faint pink color coming into his beardless cheeks, and his girlish eyes dancing.

"How much do you suppose she weighs?" he asked gleefully. "Looks to me like four hundred pounds—and some spangles!"

"Miss Silvertree's a lady, young man!" retorted Mr. Bernstein reprovingly. "She's got one of the finest figures I ever saw. Spangles? I want you to know that there's one scene where she's got on the fetchingest costume—five yards of chiffon and fifteen pounds of crystal spangles! It's beauty, classic beauty, on the screen."

Leigh suppressed a giggle this time, and only smiled inanely, edging away.

"Looks kinder foolish," Mr. Bernstein reflected, but he laid a detaining hand on Leigh's arm. "See here, you're Leigh Carter, ain't you?"

Leigh nodded. He half expected an offer for the screen, and he lingered, coloring like a girl.

"Then I guess I can say a word to you—confidential, you understand?" Mr. Bernstein winked slowly. "Entirely confidential—between gentlemen, see?" he added with a stroke of inspiration.

Leigh, flattered in spite of himself, nodded. Mr. Bernstein linked an arm in his.

"Step this way," he said casually. "Don't want to attract attention. Now, Mr. Carter—" He paused, allowing the formal address to sink in. It did. Leigh straightened up. "There's a fellow over at the inn named Corwin. Heard of him?"

Leigh's color deepened.

"I think so," he said stiffly.

Mr. Bernstein nodded.

"He's Caraffi's manager. Caraffi's up at the Hot Springs, taking baths to reduce his flesh, or to make his hair grow, and Corwin's killing time down here. Now I ain't meaning any offense. I'm speaking as a friend, you understand? This man, Corwin, he ain't a gentleman. He's a sport an' a gambler an' a loafer. He ain't any nearer being a gentleman than that there lamp-post's near being a brindled cow. He gets full, too, and when he does he talks, see?"

Leigh, beginning to suspect the drift of the talk, was becoming furious.

"I take no interest in Mr. Corwin," he said sharply. "If that's all you've got to say, Mr. Bernstein—"

"Hold on!" said Mr. Bernstein impatiently. "I've got to tell one of your family—for the sake of the lady. If you want to protect your sister-in-law from scandal, Mr. Leigh Carter, you'd better listen. I ain't believing the talk myself, but it ain't my business. If it was, I'd lam the feller good an' plenty!"

Leigh stared at him. He did not want to listen, but he was boy enough to want to hear. He breathed rather short.

"I don't know what you mean, Mr. Bernstein," he cried excitedly. "I won't hear talk of my sister-in-law!"

"Say!" Bernstein tapped his shoulder with a fat forefinger. "Ain't it better for you Carters to hear it than the whole town? I ask you that! Ain't it up to you Carters to shut his mouth?"

Leigh faltered, then he set his young teeth hard and flung his head back.

"What does he dare to say about Mrs. William Carter?" he demanded fiercely.

"I ain't telling you all he says," Mr. Bernstein replied meaningly. "I ain't soiling my mouth with it—he's a bad one! But he's saying now—to-day—that she started to run away with him yesterday, and then got scared an' come back at one o'clock in the mornin'—"

"That's a lie!" cried Leigh. "A black lie! Where is he?"

"Shucks!" said Mr. Bernstein. "You're a boy. Don't you go lookin' for him. You tell your father, Leigh Carter. He had oughter know it, he—say!"

Leigh had torn himself away and dashed off at a pace that left Mr. Bernstein gaping.

"Well, I'm darned!" he exclaimed. Then he relaxed, and stood looking after Leigh with something like satisfaction. "I guess he'll tell 'em. They wouldn't listen to me, and that Corwin — something oughter be done to him. He ain't no gentleman!"

Mr. Bernstein walked slowly and thoughtfully back to the "Belle from Borneo" poster. He felt that he had done his duty. He bore no ill-will to little Fanchon la Fare, and he hated Corwin.

Leigh, meanwhile, turned off the main street into the quiet lane behind the church and stopped to think. He stopped, panting, on the very step where Virginia had stood talking with Dan. His hot young blood was beating in his head with a noise like a sledge-hammer. Fury choked him. He remembered his own hours of anguished suspense last night, Fanchon's return after her accident, and her light kiss on his cheek. Her knight had received his accolade; he would not fail her!

Sitting under the old tree where the scarlet-headed woodpecker had bored a neat hole, Leigh made up his mind. Bernstein had told the truth about Corwin—that he knew. He couldn't doubt Bernstein. The little man's earnestness had been apparent.

Corwin must be dealt with. Leigh Carter would deal with him, too, at once. He was no child to run to his father. Besides, his father didn't like Fanchon. Lately he had thought his father an unjust man.

As for William—Leigh remembered William's supine waiting last night. Leigh did not mean to wait now. He would carry out the thing he had in mind.

He had read once of a man like Corwin slandering a noble lady. The hero—Leigh's favorite hero, by the way—had seized a horse-pistol, ridden fifty miles on a mustang, confronted the villain, held his pistol to his head, and forced him to write and sign a retraction that made the lady's character shine out as clear as noonday. Getting his breath on the old stone step of the church where he had been baptized, Leigh made up his mind as swiftly as the mustang had galloped. He took off his hat, wiped the drops of perspiration from his boyish forehead, and, straightening his collar and tie, rose and went straight home.

It happened at the moment that there was no one in the house but Miranda and his mother. As he entered, he heard his mother's voice in the kitchen.

"Miranda, get me those pitted cherries. I'm going to make a pie for dinner. Leigh loves cherry pie!"

He paused with his hand on the banister, thrilled with that poignant moment. Unknown to Mrs. Carter, her son was about to act a man's great part, to avenge the honor of the family, and she—oh, grotesque thought — she was making cherry pie for him!

But he could not wait even for such thoughts as these. He ran up-stairs and into his father's room. In the upper drawer of the old mahogany high-boy was a pistol. Mr. Carter kept it loaded as a precaution against mythical burglars. Leigh found it, thrust it in his pocket, and walked slowly down the hall.

Fanchon's door was open. She had gone out, but she had left the room in sweet confusion. He caught sight of the trailing silk and chiffon of her tea-gown—one of the family amazements—lying across the bed. On a chair hung her riding-jacket, left to dry. There was an elusive fragrance of violets, the same fragrance that always hung about her person. Evidently she had forgotten her headache, or she had gone out to walk it off.

Very reverently Leigh laid the chemist's package on a chair near the door. Then he saw a small glove lying on the floor. He picked it up, kissed it solemnly, and thrust it into his pocket. The illusion was complete—he bore his lady's glove.

Aristide Corwin was alone in his room at the inn. It happened that his open windows commanded a clear view of Mr. Carter's office opposite, and of the sign over the

"YES, A DUEL WITH ME!" LEIGH TREMBLED WITH PASSION. "YOU'VE GOT TO FIGHT—I'LL SEND MY SECONDS. YOU'RE A COWARD, SIR, AND A LIAR!"

door — "Johnson Carter, Insurance and Loans." Corwin had been staring at it moodily. He hated it for some reason.

Not that he thought much of the Carters. His business was with Fanchon, not with William Carter. But he hated that office, and he hated the whole tribe, at the moment, because Fanchon had outwitted him. She had made a fool of him. He had had his revenge, he was making the town ring with his talk, but he was not even with her yet—not yet! His eyes kindled fiercely at the thought of her. He had been drinking. Two bottles still stood on his table, and his glass was full.

He was a man who had been handsome in his first youth, but his face had coarsened and his hard eyes lowered. He rose, stripped off his coat, and sat down again in his shirt-sleeves, his collar unbuttoned from his big throat. He was hot, but he kept on drinking. It was late now, near supper-time, and there came a knock at his door.

"Come in!" he said harshly.

The door opened, and Leigh Carter entered. Corwin did not know him, he did not remember having seen him with Fanchon, but he saw a slender boy of seventeen or eighteen, well-dressed and deathly pale, with the eyes of a girl.

"What you want, kid?" he demanded sharply, setting down his glass.

Leigh walked straight across the room to the table and stood looking down at him, an image of young scorn and wrath.

"I'm Leigh Carter," he said, breathing quickly. "I've heard the infamous story you're telling about a lady—my sister-in-law, Mrs. William Carter — a story that she ran away with you last night. I'm here to demand the truth. Did you—did you dare to tell such a story here?"

Corwin's first stare of surprise gave way to a slow, insulting grin. He measured Leigh from head to foot. Then he laughed.

"Yes," he replied truculently, "I did say that—and a damned sight more, Mr. Leigh Carter—kid! And it's every bit true!"

Leigh's hands shook as he grasped the edge of the table.

"You'll take that back, Mr. Corwin," he said in a low voice, leaning forward and looking at the man opposite.

Corwin laughed, tilting his chair and putting his feet on the table. His very nonchalance stung the boy opposite with a fresh sense of insult.

"Will I?" he mocked. "Who's going to make me do it?"

Leigh, white with passion now, flashed scorn upon him.

"I will! You can't say things like that about my brother's wife."

Corwin stared at him, still laughing; then he lowered his feet to the floor and rose. Standing, he overtopped the slender Carter boy by half a head.

"Your brother's wife, eh?" he sneered. "Look here, child, you go home and eat your supper. Don't you get worked up over Fanchon. I've known the lady quite a spell. If I whistled"—Mr. Corwin threw his head back and walked across the room toward Leigh, flushed with liquor, truculent, intolerable—"if I whistled, she'd run off with me to-morrow. I don't because"—he came closer to Leigh now, laughing and sneering, insult in every line of his coarse, flushed face—"because I don't want her!"

Leigh swung around and faced him, shaking with rage.

"You lie!" he cried hoarsely.

Corwin only laughed boisterously.

"You fool kid, you don't know the lady. She—"

He leaned over, thrust his face close to Leigh's, and whispered. The boy sprang back.

"Stop!" he almost shrieked. "I'll fight you! I'm a Carter, and I challenge you to fight a duel!"

The man laughed loudly again.

"A duel with you? You kid!"

"Yes, with me!" Leigh trembled with passion. "You've got to fight—I'll send my seconds. You're a coward, sir, and a liar!"

Corwin caught him suddenly by the shoulder.

"See here, you Carter boy!" said he. "You've called me a liar twice to-day. I'm not a liar—I'll show you! Fight duels for that woman? Bah! I don't fight kids—I box their ears!"

He sneered and slapped Leigh's face. The boy, with a cry of passion and shame, wrenched himself free, snatched the pistol from his pocket, and fired pointblank.

The noise of the report rang in his own ears with a deafening crash, and there was a little whiff of smoke. Leigh reeled back, his horrified eyes fixed on the floor.

Corwin had crumpled up like a sack of meal and lay there in a heap, stone dead.

(To be continued in the December number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

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Mexico, from Cortez to Diaz

THE RICH AND SPACIOUS COUNTRY THAT IS OUR SOUTHERN NEIGHBOR AND OUR MOST BAFFLING PROBLEM—THE FIRST OF TWO ARTICLES CARRIES THE STORY FROM THE SPANISH CONQUEST TO THE DICTATORSHIP OF "DON PORFIRIO"

By Frederic Austin Ogg

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GREAT BRITAIN emerged from the war with her hand still on the thorny end of the Irish question. France came through without settling the issues of syndicalism, clericalism, and socialism. The United States carried over into the new era of peace the most baffling of her pre-war problems, namely, the stabilization of Mexico.

Mexico, indeed, is once more becoming a world problem. Not even the remaking of the map of three continents and the reconstruction of war-weary society in a score of lands have prevented English, French, and Japanese glances in this direction in recent months. Germany, too, is showing signs of almost feverish interest. The country is still in chaos; its debts are unpaid; foreigners continue to venture into it at their peril; scores of brutal assassinations have gone unpunished; property continues to be stolen or destroyed without hope of recompense; the establishment of orderly and responsible government seems as remote as when Madero was shot, or when Huerta resigned. The whole world desires, and demands, that an impossible situation—tolerated of necessity while the great war raged—shall be promptly and definitely cleared up.

No one can quite understand what that situation is, or how it came to be, without taking account of ethnological, economic, and political facts embedded in two thousand years of history. If the country's present plight is as unfortunate as any on record, its story is also one of the strangest known.

Mexico itself, as a recent writer has aptly said, is a land of vivid, startling contrasts.

The great Mexican plateau is a region bathed in perpetual, brilliant sunshine; the Mexican tropical

ONE OF THE TEMPLES OR PALACES OF MITLA, A REMARKABLE SERIES OF RUINS NEAR OAXACA, IN SOUTHERN MEXICO—THE HUGE MONOLITHIC COLUMNS FORMERLY SUPPORTED THB BEAMS OF A WOODEN ROOF

RUINS OF UXMAL, IN YUCATAN—THE MEXICAN STATE OF YUCATAN CONTAINS THE REMAINS OF MANY ANCIENT CITIES, LONG ABANDONED AND OVERGROWN BY THE FORESTS

forests are vast, somber jungles into which the sunshine barely filters. It is a land of mystery, and a land of commonplace dirt and squalid existence. Areas of fabulously rich soil contrast with arid desert regions. In Mexican history there are, on the one hand, romance, adventure, chivalry, sacrifice, lofty ideals; on the other, oppression, cruelty, sordid ambition, pestilence. Great wealth confronts the direst poverty. The lights are always strong, the shadows always dark.

Who the original inhabitants of Mexico were, and whence they came, no man nowadays can say. When the Spaniards appeared upon the scene they found the land occupied by a large number of peoples who, although belonging in all cases to the so-called red, or copper-colored, branch of the human family, were quite unlike in language, manners, and degree of civilization. From these variegated stocks have sprung the one hundred and thirty-three separate Indian tribes, speaking some fifty-three distinct languages and numerous dialects, which ethnologists recognize in the republic at the present day.

Tradition says, doubtless rightly, that the aborigines poured into the country in successive waves "out of the north"—that is, from beyond the Rio Grande. The earliest immigrants were the Itzaes, whose civilization spread over Central America and thence along the west coast of South America. Next came the Mayas, whose enfeebled descendants are now found chiefly in the peninsula of Yucatan; and then the Toltecs, who apparently moved from our own Pacific slope in the sixth century and established control over the whole of the Mexico Valley region, with a fortified capital at Tollan—the modern Tula—fifty miles north of the present Mexican capital. These were followed by the warlike Chichimecs, whose rule seems to have superseded that of the Toltecs in 1170; and finally by the Aztecs, about whom the commonest mistake is to suppose that they are now extinct, and the next most common to think that they were the country's earliest inhabitants.

ANOTHER OF THE ANCIENT BUILDINGS OF MITLA, WITH REMARKABLE CARVED WORK—THE HISTORY OF THESE RUINS IS UNKNOWN, BUT THEY BELONG TO A PERIOD ANTEDATING THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

Everywhere the modern visitor to Mexico is confronted by mute evidences of the thoughts, the ambitions, and the struggles of these dimly historic peoples. He sees

Itzaen and Mayan temples, constructed of huge blocks of stone and adorned with carvings no less rich than those that glorify Assyrian and early Egyptian monuments; Toltec pyramids, including one at Cholula, in the state of Puebla, considerably larger than that of the Egyptian Cheops, although not, like the latter, of stone construction; statues, idols, walls, mounds, terraces, canals, tombs, and columns, half buried in tropical mold or standing stark and glistening in the desert sands.

A RELIC OF EARLY SPANISH DAYS IN MEXICO—AN OLD MISSION CHURCH STILL USED THOUGH IN A RUINOUS CONDITION

MEXICO UNDER AZTEC RULE

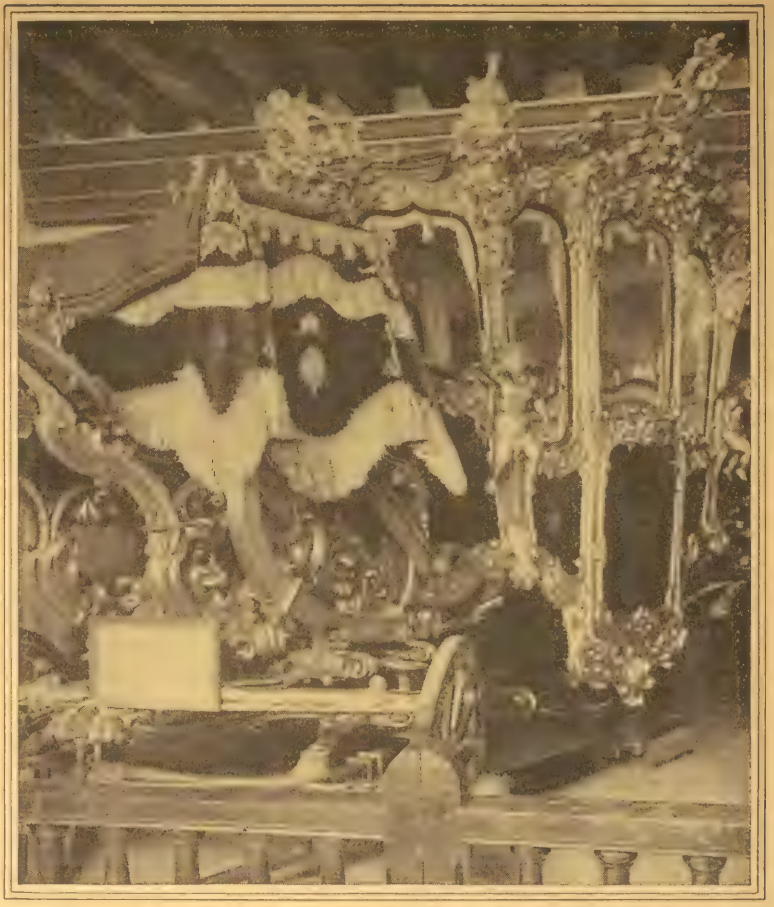
Four hundred years ago these primitive civilizations were, as they are to-day, only a memory; the ruling people—the Aztecs—were relatively newcomers. Starting apparently in the region of British Columbia, the Aztec tribe wandered southward some time in the twelfth century, crossed through Arizona into modern Mexico, built a city at Casas Grandes containing what was probably the first sky-scraper in America—a building six or seven stories high—and eventually, about 1325, arrived in the lake region of the Mexico Valley. There, on a marshy island in Lake Texcoco, it planted the city destined to become the present magnificent Mexican capital. From their patron deity, Mexitli, the wanderers acquired, in their new home, the name borne nowadays by the entire population of the country, that of Mexicans.

The tribe was originally neither numerous nor strong; but it showed wonderful capacity both for absorbing the superior culture with which it now came in contact, and for extending its sway over neighboring peoples. During the two centuries that elapsed before the coming of the Spaniards its rule was carried eastward to the Gulf of Mexico and westward to the Pacific. Large sections of the country, however, remained unconquered; and even under the lordly Montezumas of the fifteenth century the empire was never more than a loose military confederation, perpetually menaced by tribal jealousy and hatred, and ready to fall apart under the impact of any formidable outside foe.

All accounts go to show that Aztec civilization was of a high order. The people lived in large stone-built cities and towns, with carefully laid out streets and squares. They had an elaborate governmental system, with elective kings, courts of justice, and complex arrangements for military and

THE TOMB OF BENITO JUAREZ, THE CONQUEROR OF MAXIMILIAN, AND ONE OF THE HEROES OF MEXICAN HISTORY, HUNG WITH WREATHS FROM ALL THE STATES OF MEXICO

From a photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York



A RELIC OF IMPERIALISM IN MEXICO—THE STATE COACH OF THE EMPEROR MAXIMILIAN, NOW PRESERVED IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM IN THE CITY OF MEXICO

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THE PLAZA DE LA CONSTITUCIÓN, THE CENTRAL SQUARE OF THE CITY OF MEXICO, CAPITAL OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC, 7,350 FEET ABOVE THE SEA, AND CONTAINING (1910) A POPULATION OF 471,066—

civil administration. Their agriculture was at least as advanced as that of contemporary Europe, and their manufactures, especially of metals, leather, and textiles, were of no mean order. They had a highly ingenious system of picture-writing; they had worked out an amazingly accurate calendar; they were deeply religious, and the poetic aspects of their religion were never completely obscured by the harsh rites which centered in human sacrifice. Mexico City, or Tenochtitlan, as it was called by the Aztecs, was a place of some three hundred thousand inhabitants, with three hundred temples and shrines, with a public market thronged by sixty thousand buyers and sellers at a time, and with a system of street canals scarcely less extensive and picturesque than that of Venice.

Knowledge of this wonderland first came to the Spaniards quite by accident. Columbus had completed his voyages; Cuba and other West Indian islands had been colonized; the first enthusiasm of discovery had begun to wane under realization of the fact that the lands thus far laid open contained little treasure and could be made valuable only by hard work. In 1517 Hernandez de Cordoba, a hidalgo of Cuba, sailed for the Bahamas in quest of slaves. Encountering heavy gales, he was driven off his course, and eventually he landed on an unknown coast, where, to his surprise, the people lived in stone houses, wore deftly woven cotton fabrics, and by every token belonged to a far higher order of society than the inhabitants of the islands.

The country thus visited was Yucatan; and the reports carried back fired the Spanish governor with a desire to have it thoroughly explored. A cruise under command of a certain Grijalva yielded further enticing information; and in 1519 an expedition was fitted out to undertake the conquest of the mainland and to found a permanent colony. The man selected to command was a soldier and adventurer of unmatched reputation for courage and initiative, Hernando Cortez.

THE EPIC OF HERNANDO CORTEZ

The exploits that followed have been immortalized in a classic of American history, Prescott's " Conquest of Mexico." In less than thirty months Cortez and his handful of soldiers conquered for Spain an empire which at one period extended from the Isthmus of Panama to what is now the boundary of Canada, and from the Mississippi to the shores of the Pacific.

Such an achievement was made possible only by the support which the invaders received from native tribes hostile to the

—THE LARGE BUILDING WITH TWIN TOWERS IS THE CATHEDRAL, BEGUN IN 1573 AND DEDICATED IN 1667— BESIDE IT, TO THE RIGHT, IS THE SAGRARIO METROPOLITANO, THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH OF THE CITY

Aztecs, and by the uncertainty of the Montezuma and his advisers whether the newcomers were not "messengers from the east" whose visitation was ordered by the gods and accordingly ought not to be resisted. None the less, the bravery, daring, and skill displayed by both leader and followers rendered success almost inevitable.

A three months' siege of the capital in 1521—made necessary only by the indiscretion of a Spanish subordinate who ordered a massacre of natives during a festival in honor of the war-god—brought the Aztec power to an end; and thenceforth, for almost precisely three hundred years, Mexico was one of Spain's great and valued oversea possessions.

During the whole of this period the history of the country is almost exclusively the history of its European masters. Except as units of labor, the Aztec and other Indian inhabitants count for little or nothing. A country with five million people had been subjugated by a few hundred foreigners; for generation after generation it was kept in practical bondage by an alien ruling class that never numbered more than a few thousand.

The outstanding features of the Spanish régime in Mexico go far toward explaining the condition of the country to-day.

In the first place, as has been intimated, the native population was merely subjugated, not exterminated. With the exception of Peru, Mexico is, indeed, the only important Latin-American land in which the native races have not retreated and shrunk before the onset of European civilization. Forced labor in the mines and on the plantations pushed the native death-rate upward for a time; but population in general continued to grow, and no important racial element that Cortez and his successors encountered has been extinguished.

Acquired as a personal possession of the crown of Castile, the country was organized with a governmental system modeled closely upon the autocratic régime of Charles V and Philip II. During three hundred years it was ruled by a succession of five governors (1521-1528), two *audiencias*, or councils (1528-1535), and sixty-four viceroys (1535-1821).

The viceroys were the king's personal representatives. Their duties were minutely specified in general laws, as well as in special sets of instructions. Theoretically they were responsible to the Council of the Indies at Madrid, and, of course, to the king himself. The colony, however, was so remote, and communication so slow and hazardous, that in practise the officials ad-

ministered the vast territory committed to their charge very much as they willed. Some were wise and some foolish, some good and some bad. Perhaps the general level was not so far below that of French, Dutch, and even English colonial governors as has commonly been supposed.

THE QUEST OF GOLD AND SILVER

It was Mexico's fatal gift of riches that originally drew the Spaniards to the country, and from first to last their main object there was to obtain gold and silver. Cortez and his companions were disappointed in the amount of booty that they secured in the captured capital; native tradition says that vast quantities of precious objects were sunk in the waters of the lake to prevent their capture, and unavailing search is still occasionally made in the salty sands from which the water has since receded. But further exploration laid bare sources of wealth beyond the wildest expectation, and by the middle of the century Spanish treasure-ships were plying the Atlantic in rapidly increasing numbers. Already the

THE HILL AND PALACE OF CHAPULTEPEC, NEAR THE CITY OF MEXICO, CAPTURED BY AMERICAN TROOPS SEPTEMBER 13, 1847, AFTER A GALLANT DEFENSE BY THE MEXICANS

ONE OF THE HANDSOME MODERN BUILDINGS OF THE CITY OF MEXICO—THE POST-OFFICE, COMPLETED IN 1907 AT A COST OF NEARLY THREE MILLION PESOS

piratical Elizabethan seamen—forerunners of Hawkins and Drake—were scouring the Spanish main in quest of the tempting galleons.

So actively was the exploitation of mineral wealth carried on that the Spaniards quite neglected the more certain but less alluring sources of profit which lay to hand in the fertile soil, and in the mighty forests, filled with valuable timber, rich dyewoods, and rare medicinal plants, which covered large stretches of the country. Indeed, it is only within the past twenty-five or thirty years that these resources have begun to be systematically utilized.

On the other hand, the thoroughness with which the Spaniards developed the metal resources is indicated by the fact that almost every Mexican mining-camp of any consequence to-day appears in a list of mines published in 1810. The recorded production of silver in Mexico during the Spanish colonial period was more than two million pesos, that of gold sixty-eight million pesos—the peso having a value, at that time, of about one dollar in American money.

Hand in hand with the administrator and the mine-operator went the missionary. From the beginning, the conversion of the natives to Christianity was an important motive, and, within a generation after Cortez, indefatigable friars were traversing the country in all directions, preaching, baptizing, and mastering the native languages.

> The old religion withstood the assault as little as the old state; the destruction of the temples and idols by the conquerors, the death of many of the old ruling caste and of the Aztec priesthood relaxed its bonds, and the masses were relieved from the dreadful burden of the earlier faith.

An elaborate ecclesiastical hierarchy, secular and monastic, was built up, and the church became the one really effective check upon the arbitrary power of the viceroy. How strong it was is indicated by the fact that at the opening of the nineteenth century it possessed almost three-sevenths of the entire wealth of the country.

A less familiar aspect of the Spanish régime is the attention paid to education, and even to advanced learning. In this respect French and English colonizers were quite outdone. Franciscan missionaries planted a school at the side of every church, and thousands of native youth were gathered at the missions for instruction. The native languages were reduced to writing. The college of Santa Cruz, at Mexico City, founded in 1535, became the first institution for higher education in the New World, attracting to its faculty graduates of the Sorbonne and other leading European insti-

tutions. The University of Mexico, which survived to the middle of the nineteenth century, was established by decree of Charles V in 1551, thus antedating Harvard by eighty-five years. Mexican scientists made important contributions to medicine and surgery; Mexican philologists prepared admirable dictionaries and grammars of the native languages; Mexican historians rescued from oblivion most of what we know about the Aztec and other Indian inhabitants, and produced armloads of books that have honored places in the great libraries of the world.

THE WEAKENING GRASP OF SPAIN

When Philip II died, in 1598, Spain had already passed the zenith of her prosperity and power; the history of the next two hundred years is an uninspiring story of stagnation, defeat, and decline. Long after the meteoric kingdom fell to a third-rate position among the nations, however, it managed to hold its colonies to their allegiance and to draw from them much-needed sustenance.

As the eighteenth century approached its close, this last great resource was put in fresh jeopardy. The winning of independence by the English colonies to the north powerfully stimulated the Spanish dependencies' desire for autonomy. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars overthrew the old order in Europe and temporarily set up at Madrid a dynasty to which the Spanish colonies recognized no duty of obedience. Spain's grasp upon her far-flung empire, visibly weakening for two or three generations, was almost utterly relaxed.

In Mexico, as in other colonies, the signal for open revolt was the establishment of Napoleon's brother Joseph on the Spanish throne in 1808. The viceroy himself forthwith took steps to make the country independent, aiming avowedly at kingship. He ended by being shut up by the loyal element in a fortress at Vera Cruz, whence he was deported to Spain. But under the leadership of a native-born ecclesiastic, Miguel Hidalgo, parish priest of Dolores, the movement went on; and never thereafter, until Mexico was fully free, was effort more than momentarily relaxed. To this day, on the evening of November 15 of every year, the president of the republic recites from the balcony of the National Palace the famous "Grito de Dolores"—"Cry from Dolores"—from the eloquent speech wherein, in 1810, Hidalgo proclaimed the purpose of the revolutionists to liberate their country from the rule of the European:

> Long live our Most Holy Mother of Guadalupe! Long live America, and death to bad government!

For twelve years the revolution went on without rising much above the level of guerrilla warfare. Leader succeeded leader; loyalist and insurrectionary governments existed side by side, struggling for the mastery.

In 1820 a new turn was given to the situation by a royalist commander, Augustin de Iturbide, who, having surreptitiously come to an agreement with the rebel leader, announced that Mexico was to become a constitutional monarchy, united with Spain only through the person of the sovereign, Ferdinand VII. The plan met with general approval; and when it became known that the Madrid government had rejected it, a cry went up from Iturbide's followers demanding that he should himself be proclaimed emperor.

The stupid Madrid authorities had had their last chance; the situation now got quite out of hand. While the newly appointed viceroy—destined to be the last—haggled with the revolutionists for the right so much as to set foot in the country, a provisional junta, with Iturbide at its head, was ordering the election of a national congress, the first in Mexican history.

In May, 1822, when this body assembled, one faction wished to establish a republic, a second proposed to make Iturbide king, and a third preferred to have a Bourbon prince imported to become head of the new state; but all were in favor of immediate and complete independence. The upshot was the election of Iturbide as emperor; and on July 21, under the imposing title of Augustin I, the crafty leader was crowned in the capital's great cathedral.

The new régime was short-lived. Carried away by his success, Iturbide became unspeakably arrogant and extravagant. Within a month he quarreled with the congress that elected him, sent the members home, and set up a dictatorship. When the captain-general of Vera Cruz, Antonio de Santa Anna, raised the flag of revolt and proclaimed a republic, the emperor met him in arms at Jalapa and inflicted a severe defeat; but all the while Iturbide's support was

VIEW OF THE CITY OF VERA CRUZ, FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE TOWER—VERA CRUZ, FOUNDED BY CORTEZ IN 1519, IS THE PRINCIPAL SEAPORT OF MEXICO, AND WAS OCCUPIED BY AMERICAN TROOPS FROM APRIL TO NOVEMBER, 1914

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

THE CHURCH OF NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUADALUPE, AT GUADALUPE, IN THE STATE OF ZACATECAS—THE BUILDING WAS COMPLETED IN 1721

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

disintegrating, and by the beginning of 1823 his empire was confined to the capital.

Three months later he was forced to abdicate. The reassembled congress granted him a pension, but expelled him from the country; and a year later, when he returned in disguise, he was apprehended, tried, and shot. Some of his grandchildren are living to-day in Mexico City.

BIRTH OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC

The fall of Iturbide marked the triumph of republicanism. Congress forthwith set to work preparing a constitution, taking the fundamental law of the United States as its model; and on October 4, 1824, the new government was installed. On paper, the system was admirable. The United States of Mexico was declared to be endowed perpetually with a "popular, representative, federal, and republican" government; the eighteen constituent states were granted full rights of local self-government; a federal government, comprising a president, a congress, and a supreme court of judicature, was duly provided for.

Furthermore, the international situation was auspicious. Spain, although flatly refusing to recognize the new republic's independence, was manifestly unable to regain

control. England, followed by other states, entered upon cordial diplomatic relations. Most important of all, President Monroe's famous message of December 2, 1823—made public while the new Mexican constitution was in preparation—warned against European intervention, and gave at least implied promise of active support. Spain's lone attempt to reconquer the country, in 1829, was frustrated; the invading army was defeated at Tampico by Santa Anna as soon as it landed.

The young republic, however, was unable to rise to its full opportunity. With few exceptions, the men who had liberated it, and those who rose and fell in its public life during its earlier decades, were self-seeking politicians rather than statesmen.

A TYPICAL CHURCH INTERIOR IN MEXICO — THE BUILDING IS THE PARROQUIA, OR PARISH CHURCH, OF CHIHUAHUA, CAPITAL OF THE STATE OF THAT NAME, A BUILDING BEGUN IN 1711 AND COMPLETED IN 1789

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

The purely Spanish elements had small interest in the new régime, and the church was lukewarm toward a government not entirely under its control. The mass of the people lacked any true sense of nationality, and the ignorant and credulous Indians were exploited for the purposes of rebellion and personal ambition as ruthlessly as the Spaniards exploited them for profit. Bitter strife between two rival branches of Freemasonry added to the general confusion.

The first president, Guadalupe Victoria, had the good fortune to remain in office for a full term; but his successor was forced out within a few weeks, and a wearisome and endless round of elections, factional fights, abdications, and *coups d'état* began. In 1837, the federal republic was abolished and a centralized system was set up which made it more than ever easy for a scheming president to establish a dictatorship. Thereafter, control seesawed between dictators, presidents, provisional presidents, acting presidents, substitute presidents, and vice-presidents, one general succeeding another according as the fancy of the army inclined.

Nothing like the confusion and topsyturvydom, punctuated by incessant intrigue, revolution, and massacre, that prevailed in Mexico was ever witnessed in any nation claiming to be a civilized community. One president, General Comonfort, actually joined a revolution against his own government, which he succeeded in overthrowing. There was no regard for either life or property; brigandage was rampant everywhere, and murder and every form of crime was perpetrated with impunity. The republic became, in fact, a military oligarchy, and civil rights disappeared.

It is only fair to recognize that these struggles were not exclusively personal and factional, but often turned on important principles and policies. Broadly, indeed, they may be said to have been contests of the two following sorts:

First, between the privileged classes—that is, the church, and at times the army—and the masses.

Second, between the Centralists, comprising mainly the church, the army, and the supporters of despotism, and the Federalists, representing the desire for republicanism and local self-government.

Conflicts on these lines run more or less continuously through the history of all Latin-American states.

If Mexico had been a country surrounded by an insurmountable wall, it might have gone along in this fashion forever with impunity, each government, on coming into power, wiping the slate clean by repudiating all the obligations of its predecessor. But it was a nation among nations; every important people on the globe had dealings with it, and was interested in its policy. Before the republic was a decade old the governments of half a dozen foreign states were pressing for indemnities, restitutions, and other adjustments arising out of the destruction or confiscation of foreign property and the maltreatment of foreign residents or travelers.

MEXICO AND THE UNITED STATES

Among the nations having claims of the kind was the United States. Remonstrances from Washington began as early as 1828—two years after we recognized Mexican independence. In 1837, President Jackson publicly advocated reprisals if payment were much longer delayed. Under a convention of 1839, most of the claims were examined by a joint commission, and in 1843 settlement was begun. The instalments agreed upon, however, came suddenly to a halt in the next year, and in 1846-1848 Congress undertook to satisfy the clamorous creditors by arranging that they should be paid out of the Federal treasury, which, in turn, was to be reimbursed whenever the necessary sums could be collected from Mexico.

But there was another and more serious question between the neighboring republics. This was Texas.

It must be remembered that the Mexico of which we have thus far spoken was about twice as large as the Mexico of to-day. It included not only portions of Central America, but all that part of the present United States west and south of a line drawn from the mouth of the Sabine River, along the Sabine, the Red, the Arkansas, and the forty-second parallel to the Pacific, being indeed the largest country in the world, save only Russia and China.

As early as 1819, when the Sabine River was accepted as a boundary in our treaty with Spain, there was reason to believe that American emigration beyond that stream would create an irresistible demand for the annexation of the Texan territory to the United States. The next ten years saw precisely such a development, and in 1827 an attempt was made to purchase the coveted region. The Mexican government handled the situation with characteristic short-sightedness. Stubbornly refusing to sell the territory while good money could

THE TOWN AND HARBOR OF GUAYMAS, IN THE STATE OF SONORA, THE CHIEF MEXICAN SEAPORT ON THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA

From a photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

THE PRESIDENT'S DINING-ROOM IN THE PALACE OF CHAPULTEPEC, PART OF WHICH IS USED AS HIS SUMMER RESIDENCE

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

be obtained for it, it goaded the American settlers to rebellion by its tyrannical methods; and in 1836, under the leadership of Sam Houston, the Texans proclaimed their independence.

At Goliad and at the Alamo the insurgents were defeated, but at San Jacinto Santa Anna and his entire force were taken captive. To save his life, the president was glad to acknowledge the independence of the province; whereupon a republic, with Houston as president, was promptly set up and recognition obtained from the United States and the several European powers. As if moved by the spectacle of her offspring's troubles, Spain at this juncture belatedly recognized Mexican independence.

Upon Santa Anna's return to Mexico City, his recognition of the rebel republic was repudiated. The government continued to assert a futile claim to the territory, and repeatedly proclaimed that the much-discussed annexation of it to the United States would be taken as an act of war on the part of the latter country. This did not deter Texas from seeking such a union, nor

the United States from coming to a decision —although only after long delay—in favor of it. The election of 1844 was practically a referendum on the question, and the annexation was approved by the Senate early in the following year.

A CHAPTER OF DEFEAT AND DISASTER

The threatened war followed. It was really more of a parade than a war, for the Mexicans were totally unprepared. A native historian thus describes the condition of his country:

> Unstable governments; hopeless penury, a demoralized and corrupted army, without organization and without a single capable leader; the political parties effervescent and bitter in their partizanship; the clergy egotistic; the public cold.

The Mexican soldiery performed many acts of heroism; Leonidas's forces at Ther-

CLUB LIFE IN THE TROPICAL REGION OF SOUTHERN MEXICO—THE SPANISH CLUB AT MERIDA, CAPITAL OF THE STATE OF YUCATAN, AND A CENTER OF THE TRADE IN SISAL, OR MEXICAN HEMP

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

THE CATHEDRAL OF SAN LUIS POTOSI, ONE OF THE MANY FINE OLD CHURCHES OF MEXICO WHICH HAS A CLOCK PRESENTED BY PHILIP II OF SPAIN—SAN LUIS POTOSI IS THE CAPITAL OF THE STATE OF THAT NAME, AND LIES IN A RICH SILVER-MINING DISTRICT

mopylæ fought no more bravely than Santa Anna's in defense of Chapultepec. But they did not win a single important engagement. General Taylor swept the northern country, from the Rio Grande to Tampico; General Kearny and Admiral Stockton seized California; General Scott, landing near Vera Cruz, fought his way past Cerro Gordo, Contreras, Churubusco, Molino del Rey, and Chapultepec to the City of Mexico, which he occupied September 14, 1847.

The defeated nation now reached the nadir of its unhappy career. Indeed, its very life was at stake; for, under the leadership of James Buchanan, Robert J. Walker, and other influential men, a powerful movement was under way in the United States for the annexation of the whole of Mexico. Only the common sense of the mass of the people, backed up by the opposition of President Polk, prevented the plan from succeeding. But all the while—with the Stars and Stripes flying proudly from the National Palace — the ambitious generals and transient presidents of Mexico hurled pronunciamentos, fought among themselves, and shed the blood of their countrymen as if no menace whatever impended from the outside.

Prolonged negotiations led to the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, signed February 2, 1848. The United States was in a position to impose any terms that she desired. What she chiefly wanted was territory requisite to round out her possessions southwestward to the Pacific. Hence she exacted seven hundred thousand square miles, comprising mainly the Upper Californian and New Mexican lands taken during the war. For this territory she agreed to satisfy the claims of her citizens against Mexico and to pay in addition fifteen million dollars.

Such an experience would have driven most nations to a gigantic effort at rehabilitation. Not so with Mexico, whose history during the next three decades moved in the same wearisome circles as before. Revolution succeeded revolution; government meant sheer despotism; no man's life was secure, no man's property safe.

Again, the interests of American and other foreign residents and investors were jeopardized; a new crop of claims and complaints sprang up; once more, foreign

intervention was threatened. The financial condition of the country was almost hopeless, and in 1861 notice to this effect was practically served by a law suspending the payment of foreign debts.

President Buchanan's proposal that the United States should do what she has since done in several backward Caribbean countries—namely, take over the control of the customs as a measure of fiscal redemption—was rejected by a Northern, antislavery, antiannexationist majority in the Senate; and, the Civil War ensuing, European powers having grievances and claims were left free to act as they chose.

THE TRAGEDY OF MAXIMILIAN

In 1861, three of these powers—Great Britain, Spain, and France—signed a convention at London providing for a joint naval demonstration in Mexican waters, and their war-ships arrived at Vera Cruz before the end of the year. Dissension, however, arose before anything could be accomplished; for it became known that the aims of the French monarch, Napoleon III,

PORFIRIO DIAZ, FOR THIRTY YEARS THE VIRTUAL DICTATOR OF MEXICO, WHO WAS DRIVEN FROM POWER BY THE REVOLUTION OF 1911, AND DIED IN PARIS IN 1915

From a photograph by F. L. Clarke

were mainly political, that what he really had in mind was the creation in Mexico of a great dependent empire, to be ruled over by the Archduke Maximilian, brother of the Emperor Francis Joseph of Austria.

Upon this discovery, Great Britain and Spain withdrew. Napoleon, however, went ahead with his plans, despatching an army of thirty-five thousand men, which gradually got possession of most of the country.

By 1864 everything was in readiness; Austria had signed the necessary treaty, and the Pope had given the scheme his approval. A carefully picked junta of Spanish notables went through the formality of offering the crown to Maximilian; and he, accompanied by his consort, Carlotta, daughter of Leopold I of Belgium, fared forth from his villa near Trieste to his new dominion.

The rest is grim tragedy. Hardly was the honest and liberal-minded prince seated on his throne before Mexico was again in the throes of civil war. Juarez in the north, and Diaz—the later president—in the south led into the field armies sworn to overthrow the new order; and, to make matters worse, the United States, now relieved from the burden of civil war and anxious to vindicate the Monroe Doctrine, made it plain that the venture would henceforth encounter her strong opposition. Napoleon saw the handwriting on the wall, and in the spring of 1867 what was left of the French contingent in Mexico embarked for home.

Maximilian was thus left in the lurch. His first thought was to abdicate; but eventually he decided to stay with his thankless task to the bitter end. The forces of opposition, however, closed in immediately around him, and within a few short weeks he was a prisoner in the hands of Juarez. His offer to abdicate and leave the country was not accepted. Instead, he was court-martialed and ordered shot; and, despite the efforts of friends, including Victor Hugo and Garibaldi, protests from representatives of other governments, and an appeal from the United States, the cruel sentence was carried out June 19, 1867, on the Hill of Bells, outside the city of Querétaro.

To the commander of an Austrian warship, who, arriving at Vera Cruz, demanded the remains of the Emperor of Mexico, answer was returned by the Mexicans that no such person was known. When he then requested the body of Maximilian of Austria, it was delivered to him, and it now rests in the imperial vault of the Hapsburgs, in the Capuchin Church in Vienna. To heighten the tragedy, Carlotta, who had returned to Europe to seek aid, went insane, and in that condition spent her remaining days. Only in 1901 was feeling in Austria toward Mexico sufficiently mollified to permit a resumption of diplomatic relations.

The whole Napoleonic enterprise was, to put it mildly, a colossal mistake; there was no longer room on the American continent for a European-built and European-controlled monarchy. Mexico had not succeeded well with the task of self-government, but it was better for all concerned that she should keep on trying and learning. One cannot, however, withhold sympathy from the unhappy Austrian prince and princess, who were mere tools in the hands of the unscrupulous Napoleon, and who were the chief victims of his folly.

THE RISE OF PORFIRIO DIAZ

The republic was now restored, and much-needed steps were taken to rehabilitate the country in the eyes of the world. Expenditures were reduced; payments on the foreign debts were resumed; in 1868 a convention with the United States provided satisfactorily for the adjustment of claims amounting to four and a quarter millions.

Politics in Mexico, however, retained its native turbulence; insurrections, factional contests, amnesties, pronunciamentos went on as before. The constitutionalist leader, Juarez, contrived to win the unique distinction among Mexican presidents of dying a natural death while in office; but his successor, Lerdo, was tripped up by a revolution in 1876. This same turn of the wheel brought to the surface the man about whose career the entire history of the country was to center during the next thirty-five years—Porfirio Diaz. After a few months in the presidency on a purely revolutionary basis, Diaz was regularly elected, in May, 1877, for the term ending in November, 1880, and on a platform opposing reelection!

With this event, Mexico entered upon a new era, one that was outwardly far more serene than the times that had gone before—an era, none the less, that led straight to the unparalleled disorders of the Madero-Huerta-Carranza-Villa days through which we have been living. This latest and most troublous chapter of the republic's history will be reviewed in a second article, to be published next month.

Fixing Fogger

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by E. F. Ward

THE MAID OF MACASSAR WARPED FINALLY INTO TALANAO. MARILYN WENT ASHORE IN THE WORK-BOAT AND TOOK UP HER TASK

IN the privacy of the "glory-hole"—the ship's forecastle—Fogger Hilgerdy admitted to Ambu Batak, a lascar sailor, that he had lost his nerve.

"Former," explained Fogger earnestly, "I prances around in the tops contented, like one of them Brok monkeys you Malays train to pick coconuts. Now, I got to admit, I keep observin' the deck and figuring how maybe I'll let go all holts and mingle myself with the furniture in the old man's cabin."

As if to locate some sapping physical defect, Fogger began feeling over his vast body with a tentative hand.

"And look, the other day, Ambu—me, me taking slack off'n Gaff Lewis! Former, they'd 'a' been the terriblest fight between man and beast. I just don't cargo the sand I done once." Fogger tapped himself upon the head. "It's here—nobody at the wheel—or here." He tapped himself upon the left side of his immense chest. "What sand I used to carry below hatches I jettisoned—up there"; and Fogger jerked his thumb toward the north.

Ambu Batak's eyes, gentle and soft as those of a spaniel, rested upon Fogger's shock of deep-red hair, upon the vast girth of chest, upon wrists thick as a towing hawser, and he smiled indulgently. Ambu had seen Fogger wind a tough ash bar about the capstan-head as if it had been a strip of whalebone. Fogger must be joking. The lascar gave him a poke in the ribs.

"Fogger make a heehee joke," said Ambu incredulously.

Fogger shook his head soberly.

"No, I'm plumb timid. I jettisoned my sand. I puts up a bluff now and then, but it's painting over a rotten hull. I'm a light burned out. I'm a old, chafed hawser that fetches away when you bend it to a load. Sand, heart, nerve, I left 'em all abaft—up there."

Ambu Batak knew the story. Fogger Hilgerdy, one of a crew of a poaching American sealer that had been overhauled by a Russian cruiser, had been sent to the Siberian salt-mines, whence after four killing years he escaped.

Ambu picked up a battered accordion that lay upon a shelf and laid it upon Fogger's knees.

"Fogger make me some hell for fine music," pleaded Ambu. "Sure! Fogger pass me, pass everybody for fine music. Make it!"

Fogger picked up the instrument and ran his thick fingers nimbly over the silent stops. The touch of his great paws was like a caress. The music-loving Russian guards had permitted him to take the old accordion into the mines, where the spirit of his playing and singing had not a little soothed and softened his jailer's savage breast, and finally had charmed a guard into conniving at his escape.

"Fogger pass everybody for fine music," encouraged Ambu. "You know what Malay folks think, Fogger? No? Malay folks think when man has fine music he has a seven-twisted kris that kills, and fine parampuan looks through window of atap-grass house and waits for him." Ambu lowered his voice to a whisper. "One time I afraid, too, Fogger. I go to house where Siri Wowoni, she is live. I call her name easy. Siri is look through window and she is laugh. Rupprecht, white mans where Siri work, he is run out, and he is hit me two times bad on the back, one time on the head. Purty soon, though, I hain't afraid. Siri don't laugh some more. Rupprecht don't hit me with long stick. Oh, no! Siri, she puts shoes in window, sign to me she's home, and for me to come quick and sing her a fine music. How I do it? Look!"

Ambu pulled open the front of his shirt. Tattooed upon his breast, in vivid red, green, and brown, was a figure representing a Malay lute, a twisted kris dagger, and the face of a girl peering from the round window of a grass hut.

"I go to a devil-devil doctor, Fogger. He do this with needle and little paint in boxes. Then I hain't afraid. Siri don't laugh. Rupprecht, he sees it I carry seven-twisted kris."

Ambu leaned forward and laid a slender brown finger upon Fogger's thick arm.

"You do it, too, Fogger. You sing a nice music. You no need be afraid. Devil-devil is friend of Ambu. For Ambu's friend, he will do it, too, on Fogger's breast."

Fogger burst into boisterous laughter.

"You think that hocus-pocus makes a man brave, Ambu? You figure painting up a man's billet-head makes him stanch? Poolie!"

The sensitive, mobile countenance of the lascar showed the hurt inflicted by the white man's derisive scoffing. Ambu leaned back, and in the gathering darkness of the forecastle pityingly studied the rubicund countenance of Fogger Hilgerdy.

Fogger, from having fingered the silent stops, inflated the bellows of the accordion and drew forth a plaintive chord. Through various improvisations he ran, the tones growing louder, bolder, more confident, until finally the booming voice burst forth:

> "When the gale's off Isanutski,
> All hands and the bosun husky,
> We'll set snug close in the glory-hole,
> And pass the word to Swenska Ole
> To make the hell-box frizzle;
> We'll smell the lobscouse sizzle—
> All hands and the bosun husky
> When the gale's off Isanutski!"

A delighted clapping of small hands sounded from the top of the companionway. Fogger's red face flushed redder still. He tossed the accordion into the bunk and crept in after it.

"More! More!" cried a girl's voice from the deck.

But Fogger crawled farther back into the bunk.

Ambu bowed his own head in shame; for it was shame to have as friend one so laggard, so recreant, as Fogger Hilgerdy. Here this fine parampuan girl, who had boarded the ship at Apia, had tried her maidenly best to coax the gigantic Fogger and the booming voice to the deck. Again and again had she tried and failed. Assuredly Fogger had left his nerve in the Siberian salt-mines.

Fogger must have help, and that was all there was to it—supernatural help, from the strongest devil devil in the whole Malay Archipelago.

Such a devil-devil dwelt at Talanao Island. The Maid of Macassar was bound for Talanao. The nice parampuan girl was likewise bound for Talanao. At Talanao lived Siri Wowoni.

Fogger needed help, devil-devil help. At Talanao, devil-devil help he should have.

II

In all accuracy and faithfulness of chronicle, Marilyn Davies took none too aptly to her duties as governess in the household of Rupprecht, resident governor of Talanao Island. Fortunately for Marilyn, Rupprecht himself was closely engaged in trafficking with the wild hill-tribe Malays, buying areca-nut, crude sugar, dried madder plant, and the bark called gambier. Frau Rupprecht, who ate and drank robustly, rested for the greater part upon the rattan couch in her room. Wherefore, without espionage or interference, Marilyn taught Wilhelm Rupprecht, aged ten, and Eloise, aged twelve, weird theories concerning fractions, and proposed radical measures for settling the disputes between disagreeing nouns and verbs.

Which is not so surprising after all. Marilyn was no teacher. Marilyn had accepted the place of *pengajar,* or governess teacher, simply for the reason that Rupprecht wanted a teacher and Marilyn desired greatly to dwell for a time beneath the Rupprecht atap-grass roof.

A very few weeks before Marilyn had accosted, in tones severe, the floor-walker in her department of Chicago's largest emporium.

"Listen here, Simpson! Swing your spot-light onto that wool poplin there. The complexion of that poplin hain't stuck on half as sure as mine is. There's an old grandma in here a few minutes ago from Minooka. She takes off one silk mitt, lams down a bundle of that poplin she's bought, and makes a terrible holler. You could 'a' heard her to Kankakee. Look at it! It was brown when she bought it; now it looks like something from the delicatessen."

Simpson leaned across Marilyn's counter and discoursed at length about dyestuffs; how, unfortunately, the Americans had not yet mastered the secret of fixing dyes so that they wouldn't run. The Germans, Simpson said, knew nothing whatever about psychology, though they did know a little something about dyes.

It transpired that Simpson related in the office of the emporium the matter of Marilyn's plaint. Present at the time had been one Bowker, representing the identical mill that had woven and dyed the turncoat poplin.

Bowker, aged fifty, was introduced to Marilyn. He took her out to supper, where, never once touching upon the theme of how lonesome a man got in a big city where he didn't know any one, he got down to the matter of dyestuffs.

Bowker had a plan—had had a plan for weeks. His company had told him to go as far as he liked. Could Marilyn be absent from the United States for, say, six months? Did Marilyn have the nerve?

Marilyn could, and did.

Promptly she had been outfitted—modestly, as befitted a governess teacher. Bowker wired to his intelligence-office friend in San Francisco that at last he had found a *pengajar* to teach the children of the household of Rupprecht.

Marilyn took passage to the South Seas on a steamer. From Apia she sailed on a wind-jammer, the Maid of Macassar, for the Maid was the only craft that would be making Talanao for three months.

The Maid sulked in the doldrums, then fretted along against the contrary trades. Time hung heavily upon Marilyn's ambitious hands. She couldn't study fractions all the time, or draw up articles of armistice for belligerent parts of speech.

There was a red-haired giant of a sailor aboard who gathered in ropes at the pin-rail as if they had been cambric threads, and who sang in a voice that boomed like the fog siren in Chicago harbor. But the big fellow was girl-shy. Marilyn couldn't coax him to the deck with his battered accordion, though she tried by every means that a nice girl may.

The Maid of Macassar warped finally into Talanao. Marilyn went ashore in the work-boat and took up her task. By day she labored with the juvenile Rupprechts. By night, fearfully at first and then more boldly, she began to spy upon the little galvanized-iron house at the far border of the *campong,* where Rupprecht, for some reason, spent many secluded hours.

Marilyn found herself mightily interested in Siri Wowoni, the little lascar housemaid. Siri wore a wonderful *sarong,* or robe, which enveloped her graceful form, which left one arm and shoulder bare, and fell to her bare brown ankles. Within doors, as was the

custom, Siri went barefoot. Abroad, Siri wore grass sandals.

Marilyn studied the *sarong*. It was hand-made, and the native craftsman had known his trade. The coloring was gorgeous. Nothing wrong about those dyestuffs! They were fixed all right; no danger that they would run.

A DEVIL-DEVIL MAN WAS GYRATING GROTESQUELY, RECITING HIS WEIRD SPELL. THEN HE FELL UPON THE—

In the mean time, the Maid of Macassar was loading her cargo space with areca, a few bags of crude sugar, and bundles of madder and gambier.

Marilyn, peeking surreptitiously through the narrow window of the galvanized-iron house, observed Rupprecht when he took little dabs of red stuff and brown stuff and mixed them with something out of two bottles that made the red and brown stuff smoke. There was the secret that she greatly desired, that Bowker desired, and that would appease the old grandma from Minooka.

III

MARILYN studied the galvanized-iron house. The iron door was always kept locked with a big brass padlock. The single window opened readily enough, but it was barred across, like the windows in the Cook County jail.

Siri Wowoni knew a few words of *bêche-de-mer* English, and Marilyn was picking up some Malay—a very little, for she was perplexed by the duality of a language which decreed one word for persons of the upper caste and another word for just folks. When Rupprecht ate, that was *santap;* when Marilyn or Siri ate, that was *makan.*

Every day, when Rupprecht had completed his labors in the galvanized-iron house, Siri would thrust her slender brown feet into the grass sandals, shoulder her big broom of split rattan, and shuffle across the *compong.* Siri always snapped the padlock after her when she had swept the house, for she would have received a lashing across her bare shoulders with a shark's-hide whip had she failed to remember what Rupprecht had told her about the big lock.

The dull-eyed Rupprecht children had returned to their own house. Siri was sweeping the floor of Marilyn's hut. Presently she would go and sweep the galvanized-iron house. Marilyn was watching the little lascar maid—the play of her round, brown arms, the graceful switching of the gorgeous *sarong.*

Marilyn stepped up beside Siri, took her by the shoulder, turned her about, and eyed her professionally. Then Marilyn dived

into her suit-case and into her steamer-trunk, and presently Siri Wowoni was regarding herself in the mirror, decked out in a sport skirt of rather obtrusive pattern, a waist of georgette, and a wrist-watch.

Siri bowed and twisted before the mirror, laughed, patted herself, paraded back and forth. Suddenly she gave a cry and started to solve the problems of the hooks and eyes and various contraptions that make a white woman's garb a mystery to males and Malays. Rupprecht was

—EARTH. FROM THE SHADOWS A DOZEN MALAYS LEAPED TO THEIR FEET, BRANDISHING SHORT SWORDS AND SPEARS

leaving the little house. Siri would have to hurry and sweep out, for there was the whip of shark's hide that stung and cut when she loitered.

Marilyn held up a finger, smiled mischievously, draped Siri's *sarong* about her, and slipped her feet into the grass sandals. Then Marilyn shouldered the big rattan broom, holding it in a manner to hide her head and face from the eyes of any one who might be looking from Rupprecht's house.

Siri watched Marilyn cross the *campong* and enter the iron house. Then Siri resumed the parade back and forth before the mirror. After a time she chanced to glance from the window. She gave a cry and clasped her hands to her bosom.

Rupprecht must have forgotten something. He was crossing the *campong* toward the galvanized-iron hut.

Siri, emitting little squeaking, animal-like cries, ran frantically about the room. The shark's-hide whip!

Again she ventured a look. Rupprecht was emerging from the iron house. He turned, snapped the padlock, and gave a pull to make sure that it had caught. Then he hurried toward his house, clapping his hands loudly. A lascar boy answered the summons.

The lascar darted into a hut and reappeared clothed only in his ten-colored loincloth, the handle of a seven-twisted kris dagger showing at his right hip.

With a gesture of command, Rupprecht pointed in the direction of the distant hills, where lived Tamb Otok and his savage, fanatical tribesmen.

The lascar broke into an easy lope as of one who goes upon a long journey, and disappeared into the jungle.

Rupprecht, the shark's-skin whip under one arm, stood in the door of Marilyn's hut. He laid his hand upon Siri's quivering shoulder, dragged her forth, led her to the iron hut, unlocked the door, thrust her within, and snapped the lock.

IV

THE process of loading the Maid of Macassar proceeded slowly. Sampans loaded with areca, gambier, and madder warped alongside, and the burlap sacks were hoisted and lowered away through the open hatches by a winch.

Fogger Hilgerdy, whose duty was to steady the hoists as they lowered, groaned aloud with every movement of his arms. His chest was on fire. A heap of coals piled upon his skin could scarcely have conferred more exquisite pain than the aftermath of

inflammation which followed the operations of the needle of the old devil-devil.

Alternately, Ambu strove to encourage Fogger and upbraided him with shrill Malayan invective for his lack of manhood. For a very giant of a man to whimper so over a trifling thing like the sting of a tattoo needle! To the lascar, a stoic disregard for pain was a man's first attribute. The spell had failed. Fogger Hilgerdy was no more the man than he had been before—which was to say no man at all.

A derisive smile had begun to settle upon Ambu's brown face. At a sudden wince of pain, Fogger would swear, while Ambu would laugh, point a mocking finger, and call Fogger "little lady."

The glory-hole contingent had eaten supper. Fogger stood by the rail, his breast bared to the breeze in the hope that he might gain surcease from fiery torment.

Ambu Batak, ignoring Fogger, emerged from the companionway and approached the bosun.

"Mr. Hawkins man," said Ambu to the bosun, "you care whole lot I take it the work-boat, maybe row some to shore?"

Hawkins didn't care; Ambu might have the boat.

Fogger glanced shoreward. With nightfall, a camp-fire had begun to gleam at the far border of the *campong*. Now and then bodies of men interposed would momentarily obscure the fire. Some sort of a Malay festivity was in progress, thought Fogger.

Ambu Batak, having gained permission to use the work-boat, went below. Fogger followed. Ambu stood in the middle of the floor, clad only in a ten-colored loin-cloth, the black handle of a twisted kris showing from the fold of the cloth over the lascar sailor's right hip.

Ambu gave Fogger a contemptuous look, passed him without a word, and ascended to the deck.

To the deck followed the shamefaced Fogger, cut to the quick by the insolent patronage of his one-time friend.

"What's the pukpuk, Ambu?" asked Fogger, with a pitiful attempt at playful banter. "What's the row? You look like a party that was goin' to war."

Ambu returned no answer, but gave a heave on the falls, lowered away the work-boat, slid down the falls, and cast off the hoisting-hooks. Not until then did he deign to say:

"I go away on maybe big fight time—I don't know."

"Who you figure on fighting, Amb?"

"One mans," replied Ambu. "Maybe five or seven mans. I don't know."

"And you're goin' alone?"

Ambu nodded his head. Yes, he remarked—better go it alone than expect any aid from a little lady.

The scarlet of Fogger's face flooded his neck and chest and mingled with the burning red of the inflamed area surrounding the tattooing of the devil-devil.

"Many hillman Malay come," said Ambu. "Many like I got fingers. Bad and crazy hillman. I borrow mate's sea-glasses. I take a look. Hillmans dance and say a tabu. Once more time I look. I see little iron house. Hanging in window is little grass shoes like Siri Wowoni she wear, and little leather shoe like white parampuan girl she wear; so I go quick. Maybe there be a fight time."

Ambu shipped the oars and dipped the blades. There was a thud. Fogger Hilgerdy had dropped from the ship's rail upon the work-boat's thwart.

From Ambu's hand Fogger seized an oar and fitted it into the lock. Then, though it was as if hot iron hooks were slowly tearing the flesh from his breast, Fogger rowed, bending the tough ash oar into a curve with each stroke. He rowed so hard that Ambu, for all his advantage of bow seat, could scarcely keep the prow of the craft pointed shoreward.

When the boat touched the sands, Ambu leaped upon shore, drawing the seven-twisted kris from its place. Fogger pawed about beneath the thwarts and fetched forth an iron-barbed boat-hook with a tough hickory haft.

Side by side, Ambu and Fogger crept to the edge of light flickering from the camp-fire. A devil-devil man was gyrating grotesquely, reciting his weird spell. Then the devil-devil fell upon the earth, where he lay recumbent. From the shadows a dozen Malays leaped to their feet, brandishing their short swords, blow-pipes, and spears.

Fogger's vast hand settled upon Ambu's arm.

"What's the pukpuk, Amb?"

"Devil-devil say it, two girls go away to hills, never come back some more."

"Oh, so! Oh, so!"

The Malays were running toward the galvanized-iron hut. Ambu Batak sped

across the sandy, hummocky stretch, with Fogger at his side.

The door of the hut stood open. Siri Wowoni stood silent, submitting with Oriental stoicism while a hideous hillman tied her wrists with strands of atap. The little white girl, Marilyn Davies, was screaming, striking, fighting like a very fury.

Fogger Hilgerdy, bellowing like a mad bull walrus, sprang in among the Malays, striking savagely with the boat-hook.

And still striking and shouting meaninglessly, "Oh, so! Oh, so!" he went down finally with a hillman's spear quivering beneath his shoulder-blade.

V

Fogger awakened to the familiar roll and toss of the Maid of Macassar breasting a head sea. Fogger had something little, soft, and warm in his great paw of a hand. His gaze settled upon it and followed up a wrist—an arm. It was a girl's hand, the hand of Marilyn Davies.

The bosun also stood beside the bunk. The bosun was now bragging of the rude though skilled surgery that he had committed upon the body of Fogger, now conceding something to good nursing and the patient's robust constitution.

"You certainly run a sick-bay like an old hand," commended the bosun. "You can skipper a sick-bay every time for my money. Besides, Fogger is tough—dreadful tough. He's stout as a sulfur whale, and he's got nerve—sand. He's just naturally loaded to the gunwale with sand. Get well? Sure!"

Fogger regarded Marilyn with a tender look, then glanced at the bosun, bestowing upon that worthy soul a portentous wink. The bosun knew a thing or two, and went about his duties, leaving Marilyn in command of the sick-bay.

"Fogger," said Marilyn, speaking with the familiarity allowable in a nurse, "I want to ask you something. I'm curious. Funny, hain't it, a girl being curious? But I want to know. It's been awful important to me, in a way. What does that mean tattooed on your chest—that cheese-knife, the ukulele, and that Mabel-in-jail stuff? 'Tain't ladylike to speak of it, is it? Oh, I saw it a dozen times when me and the bosun was dressing your hurt. What does it mean?"

"Why," stammered Fogger, "it kind of means it's a hocus-pocus lascar sailor idea in tattooin' to give a fellow nerve. I—I kind of had tough goin' for four years. It was Ambu's idea."

Marilyn was regarding him tenderly, reminiscently. Again there was filmed before her fancy the vision of hideous savages hauling her forth from Herr Rupprecht's hut, and the heroic figure of Fogger Hilgerdy mowing down the hillmen with the boat-hook.

"Give you nerve, eh? Well, it worked!"

She gave Fogger's hand a pat.

"Another thing," she added. "It hain't a secret. I was after the system of handling that dyestuff. I had it in a bottle. Rupprecht took it away from me. Then, when I saw the color of that tattoo on your chest, I asked Ambu, 'cause it's the same colors—two of 'em—that I'm after. Ambu got 'em for me from the devil-devil. I've got 'em in a bottle again—the oil they use to fix the colors so they won't run. Now tell me about those four tough years in Siberia, Fogger."

But Fogger shook his head.

"Not now," he said. "I'll be up in a day or so. Then, nights, on deck, I and you settin' close together, I'll tell you how I got fixed so I won't run, neither. And I'll sing a sailor song for you called, 'Hell to Breakfast.' It's about a sailor that hunted through seven seas till he found her!"

THE STAR OF BETHLEHEM

Aldebaran and Argol and Altair,
Aye, all the radiant planets whatsoe'er,
How dim their lustrous light
Seems when the Bethlehem star ascends the night!

Although we see the glory of its gleams
But in our divination, in our dreams,
Forevermore for us
It makes the earth and heaven luminous.

Ross Hamilton

Wall Street's New Leaders

THE REMARKABLE GROUP OF MEN WHO HAVE COME TO THE SEATS OF FINANCIAL POWER DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS—THE MARKED DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NEW CHIEFS AND THOSE OF THE OLD SCHOOL

By Wilbur Wamsley

A NEW breed of men—clear of eye, alert of brain, strong of body, and quick of judgment—have swung into the saddle in Wall Street. The old magnates are passing on, one after another, and younger men are grasping the reins of leadership. The new captains of finance have come to the front by various paths, by devious highways and byways, most of them *via* the University of Hard Knocks; but they have arrived, and their feet are firmly planted.

If a nation needs billions for rehabilitation, or a gigantic corporation wants millions for expansion, or a State or municipality seeks money for improvements, these are the men to be consulted. They sit firmly in the saddle, in the world's present financial center, and theirs is a power of which King Midas himself little dreamed.

They are hard riders, too, these young knights of the dollar, and hard hitters. They can ply the whip along with the best of them, and frequently do; but their methods of operation and procedure are as far removed from those employed by the past and gone generation of industrial and banking leaders, as day is from night. The old slogan, "The public be damned," has been relegated to the scrap-heap for all time to come.

Incidentally, it is a new and rejuvenated kingdom in which the new giants of Wall Street wield their golden scepters of financial power. The Old Guard of the Street was chiefly concerned with stock manipulation, but the big men of to-day use the stock-market chiefly as a means of raising money to finance immense enterprises. Wall Street has ceased to be exclusively a center of speculation. In the popular mind, as well as actually, it is losing its evil repute as a street with "a river at one end and a graveyard at the other—of which destinations the hapless wanderer in speculation may take his choice." Rather, it has become the headquarters of the bankers of our hemisphere and of the men who head the world's largest industrial corporations. These new giants of the Street touch with their scepters of power every activity of the nation.

THE OLD GENERATION AND THE NEW

A comparison between the old crowd of financiers and the new affords sharp contrasts of a dozen sorts—contrasts in personalities, in methods and tactics, and, what is probably most important, in the prevailing attitude toward the investing public. As business of every kind has expanded and prospered in these last strenuous years, so has Wall Street expanded and prospered. Billion-dollar loans to foreign governments, and gigantic corporations with capitalizations running into hundreds of millions, have brought to the front young men with the ability and capacity to think in these terms. Wall Street has set up as its leaders men who have kept abreast of the times, who have demonstrated their ability to decide and to act quickly and largely, who can give and take hard knocks, and whose judgment and foresight have been proved in time of stress.

The old-school captain of finance, who used to be muck-raked regularly, and whom the public at large both hated and held in breathless awe for his great wealth, was almost always a recluse. He preferred to sit behind the scenes and pull the wires that made the puppets dance. Stock-juggling, market-rigging, plain and fancy manipulation—these were generally regarded as his

HENRY P. DAVISON, A LEADING PARTNER IN THE FIRM OF J. P. MORGAN & CO., THE LARGEST PRIVATE BANKING ORGANIZATION IN AMERICA

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stock in trade; and such methods, backed by enormous capital, were always supposed to be successful, to his enormous profit. The investing or speculating public, on the other side of the picture, was commonly depicted as a lamb with long, curly wool. The result, in the public mind, at least, was inevitable. When the two met, the lamb invariably lost his wool.

A vast volume of such traditions—some of them fact, but most of them fancy—grew up about these men of the old school, until many of them became, in the popular mind, nothing more or less than financial buccaneers, with the Jolly Roger floating ominously at the forepeak of the craft they captained.

NEW MEN AND NEW METHODS

But no such legends have been allowed to accompany the new generation to the front. Where the old generation preferred to work behind closed doors, and to talk in whispers, the new has worked in the open and spoken to the world at large in clear and unmistakable terms.

Perhaps the best example of the new attitude toward the public which the present régime has brought in with it is to be found in the relations existing between most of the younger leaders and the press. The old-time financial magnate regarded any reporter sent by his editor to ask questions as a busybody thrusting his nose into other people's business. A newspaperman who secured an interview with one of the old school had ample reason to be proud of his day's work.

To-day the situation is exactly reversed. The great men of Wall Street habitually invite conferences with the scribes who write the news of finance. There is hardly a big banker or the head of a big corporation in the financial district to-day who may not be interviewed by any newspaperman with a legitimate errand. Many of the magnates set aside a few minutes on their daily schedule of appointments to receive the news-gatherers and answer questions. Most of the big banking institutions maintain their own publicity bureaus and furnish the newspapers official statements of their activities.

This, perhaps more than any other single factor, has tended to dispel the pall of odium which used to hang over Wall Street like a blanket of fog. It is no longer pictured in the public mind as the mysterious cave of big business, from which now and then rush hungry ogres seeking whom they may financially devour. Surely it is true that "the old order changeth, yielding place to new."

Your twentieth-century man of affairs in Wall Street is most likely to be a well-set-up chap in the forties, a bit thick in the chest, spick and span as to dress, and with a chin that protrudes well over his collar. He is most likely to have a warm handshake and a well-modulated voice, and to speak in a crisp tone, containing an unconscious power of command. He smiles rather than frowns, and is cordial and pleasant in manner. His is an outdoor look, for he usually spends a day or so each week at golf or some other outdoor sport of which he is fond. You are very likely to see the picture of a sweet-faced woman on his desk, and generally she has two or three children about her.

There is inspiration for the young men of America in the life-history of nine out of ten of these husky young men who stand head and shoulders above their fellows in the financial district. Here and there is to be encountered one whose mouth, at birth contained the proverbial spoon of gold, who inherited a great fortune, and who is merrily engaged in gathering more. These, however, are the exceptions; indeed, the men of inherited wealth and power who are to-day real leaders may be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Most of the new giants of the new régime were shot out into the cold, cold world with physical assets which could be covered by a twenty-dollar bill, but with an invisible asset of the will to "get there" which could not be computed in terms of dollars and cents. Most of them have forced their way upward through the ruck of a great field of starters. They were the sons of farmers, or preachers, or country storekeepers, whose ambitions did not run toward farming or preaching or storekeeping, and who struck out for themselves. Dame Fortune, too, has taken a hand here and there, and boosted them along.

LEADERS OF INDUSTRY AND FINANCE

Every great industry produces its own leaders—men who are looked to as the final authorities in its technicalities and who wield undisputed guidance. Gary, Schwab, and Grace in steel, Sinclair and Doheny in oil, Whelan and Duke in tobacco, Guggen-

THOMAS W. LAMONT, WHO IS RANKED WITH MR. DAVISON AS A WHEEL-HORSE OF THE FAMOUS BANKING HOUSE OF J. P. MORGAN & CO.

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heim in copper, Colt in rubber, Durant in motors, Du Pont in explosives and coal, Allan Ryan in airplane engines and typewriters, are to-day among the men to whom their industries look for leadership. Each heads one or more powerful producing corporations in his line.

So has the banking world—the most powerful of them all—brought forth its new chieftains as the old ones passed. Henry P. Davison and Thomas W. Lamont of the Morgan firm; James A. Stillman, who recently succeeded his father at the National City Bank; Everett Sweezy and George F. Baker, Jr., of the First National; Harvey Gibson and Alexander Ostrom, of the Liber-

ty National; Herbert K. Twitchell, of the Chemical National; Eugene V. R. Thayer, of the Chase National; Charles H. Sabin, of the Guaranty Trust Company, and Eugene Federal Reserve Bank—these are a group of younger men to whom Wall Street has turned for leadership, who sit firmly in the saddle and hold the reins with no uncertain

CHARLES H. SABIN, PRESIDENT OF THE GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY, WHICH RANKS AS THE LARGEST INSTITUTION OF ITS KIND IN THE WORLD, AND WHICH WAS THE LARGEST SINGLE PURCHASER OF LIBERTY BONDS

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Stetson and W. Palen Conway, his able lieutenants; Raymond Jones, of the Merchants National; Jerome Hanauer, of Kuhn, Loeb & Co.; Seward Prosser, of the Bankers Trust Company; Benjamin Strong, of the or faltering grasp. With three or four exceptions, these men—most of whom are just passing into that stage of life known as "middle-aged"—have climbed the ladder, rung by rung, from the very bottom. Most

of them know from actual experience the feel of poverty's pinch.

PARTNERS IN THE HOUSE OF MORGAN

Probably the most powerful of these younger financial giants are the two Morgan partners, Henry Pomeroy Davison and Thomas W. Lamont, now the wheel-horses of the country's largest private banking institution, J. P. Morgan & Co. Davison, who is just fifty-two, used to drill reading, writing, and arithmetic into the heads of his scholars in a country school. Then he became an assistant cashier in a New York bank, and to save car-fare he used to pedal a bicycle from his furnished room in One Hundred and Fourth Street down to the bank each morning. During the war he was chairman of the American Red Cross, whose membership comprised one-quarter of the entire population of the United States.

Thomas W. Lamont, who has not yet passed his fiftieth birthday, used to hustle news items for the New York *Tribune,* and started up the financial ladder as a clerk in the Bankers Trust Company. Recently, with Albert Strauss, another of the younger financiers, he was the adviser selected by the Treasury Department to aid President Wilson in dealing with financial problems at the Peace Conference.

These two men have come swiftly to the front in the last ten years. As representatives of J. P. Morgan & Co. they have had a hand, at least, in the framing and disposition of practically every loan that has been made to a foreign country since the start of the world war, and their success in these big operations has fixed them firmly as stars in the financial heavens.

MEN OF THE GUARANTY TRUST

Another young man who has made his way into the front rank during the last few years is Charles Hamilton Sabin, president of the Guaranty Trust Company, the largest institution of its kind in the world, and the largest single purchaser of Liberty Bonds. Mr. Sabin was undecided whether his path to success lay in managing a country store or in owning a flour-mill. He tried both, as a boy. Baseball decided the problem. He was a good pitcher. The biggest bank in Albany had the poorest ball club, which was always being trimmed by its opponents. Sabin took up baseballing and bookkeeping at the bank's invitation, and, by dividing up his time, made a success of both jobs.

His young manhood was spent in what he says is the hardest job he has ever tackled—climbing from a clerkship to the vice-presidency of that country bank; but he finally made it. Then he found opportunities of meeting metropolitan bankers, and in 1907 he came to New York as president of the National Copper Bank. From that he went to the vice-presidency of the merged Mechanics and Metals Bank, and thence, in 1910, to the vice-presidency of the Guaranty Trust Company, from which place he naturally stepped into the president's chair.

Much of Mr. Sabin's success, he says himself, has been due to the men he has picked as assistants, and to the fact that he has been able to shift heavy responsibilities to the shoulders of his lieutenants and forget them. Two of the ablest of these are Eugene W. Stetson and W. Palen Conway, both marked as " comers " in the blue book of Wall Street.

LEADERS IN THE BANKING WORLD

Everett Sweezy, now a power in the First National Bank, used to sweep out a savings-bank at Riverhead, Long Island, and he is said to have wielded a very painstaking broom, too. Riverhead's financial boundaries became too restricted for him, however; and he made for New York, where he secured a job as bond salesman with Harris, Forbes & Co. His record of bond sales approached the highest ever set in the financial district, and just eight years after his engagement as a salesman he became the firm's general manager.

When the United States entered the world war, George F. Baker, of the First National Bank, was chairman of a committee composed of bankers and bond men whose duty it was to round up subscriptions for the Liberty loans in the financial district of New York. Everett Sweezy was the whip for this committee, and his remarkable success in landing big applications attracted Mr. Baker's attention. Within a short time the blue-ribbon bond salesman stood high on the pay-roll of the First National Bank, and he is now Mr. Baker's right-hand man and the representative of the bank in most of that institution's big transactions.

Harvey D. Gibson came to Wall Street *via* the American Express Company, and he

EUGENE W. STETSON, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY, AND ONE OF MR. SABIN'S ABLEST LIEUTENANTS

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"grew up" so rapidly in the atmosphere of the financial district that at thirty-four he was elected president of the Liberty National Bank, Thomas Cochran, another financial light of the younger generation, having left that institution to become a vice-president of J. P. Morgan & Co. At the time of his election, a little more than two years ago, Mr. Gibson was the youngest bank president in the financial district—an honor which has since passed to Raymond Jones, head of the Merchants National Bank. During the last year of the war Mr. Gibson was general manager of the American Red Cross.

Another comer whose desk is in the Liberty National building is Alexander Ostrom, who eight years ago was assistant cashier of a little bank in the Northwest. With the backing of a number of wealthy

W. PALEN CONWAY, ALSO A VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE GUARANTY TRUST COMPANY, AND A RISING POWER IN THE WORLD OF FINANCE

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Norwegians and Swedes, Mr. Ostrom came to New York's financial district as head of the Scandinavian Trust Company. That Company was recently merged with the Liberty National, and with it the Liberty took over Mr. Ostrom. He has been of particular assistance to the financial community in banking relations with the Scandinavian countries, with which he is intimately acquainted.

Two years ago, when Albert H. Wiggin, former president of the Chase National Bank, decided to unload some of his responsibilities upon younger shoulders, he combed the country for a man big enough to take the position. He found him in the person of Eugene V. R. Thayer, president of the Merchants National Bank, of Boston. Mr. Wiggin took the chairmanship of the bank's board and Mr. Thayer was named

president. He has been in the Wall Street district a scant two years, but in that time he has carved out a niche for himself. During the war Mr. Thayer did good service as head of the Essential Industries Finance Corporation.

Mr. Wiggin, by the way, though he has given up the active headship of the Chase National Bank, where he had served for fourteen years as vice-president and president successively, must still be reckoned among the younger men who are powers in finance. He retains important banking and insurance interests, and is one of the financial advisers of a long list of railroad, mining, and industrial companies.

EVERETT B. SWEEZY, WHO MADE A REMARKABLE RECORD AS A BOND SALESMAN, AND WHO IS NOW VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF NEW YORK, AND ONE OF THE NEW LEADERS IN THE BANKING WORLD

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HARVEY D. GIBSON, PRESIDENT OF THE LIBERTY NATIONAL BANK, WHO WAS UNTIL RECENTLY THE YOUNGEST BANK PRESIDENT IN THE FINANCIAL DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

The death of the late James Stillman, in March, 1918, created a gap in the ranks of the Old Guard of financiers which was hard indeed to fill. As banker of the Standard Oil Company, Mr. Stillman was probably as largely responsible for the financial and commercial success of the world's largest oil company as was John D. Rockefeller himself. His son, James A. Stillman, has now stepped into his father's shoes as head of the National City Bank. Although it is surpassed in magnitude by a few European banks which are of a more or less different class, the National City stands foremost in America, and may justly be termed the largest institution of its kind in the world. Wielding the power and prestige of such an organization, and backed by a great personal fortune, the younger Stillman is making his influence widely felt in the financial world.

Raymond Jones of the Merchants Na-

tional, the youngest bank president in the Wall Street district, and George F. Baker, Jr., are two youngsters who are being groomed for big places in the Street.

WALL STREET AND THE BIG INDUSTRIES

So closely are the banks of the financial district and the stock-market interwoven in their interests that some, but not all, of the new giants of Wall Street, through the agency of their subsidiary trust companies, are also market leaders. A new cycle of finance has brought new conditions. No longer, as in the old days, is the market dominated by one or two men. To-day, half a hundred men hold places of power, each in his particular line. As oil, motors, tobacco, food products, ships, steel, and a dozen other industries have grown and expanded, the corporations that operate them have come to Wall Street for money to carry on their enterprises. They have brought with them to the market-place a new set of leaders.

In the life histories of most of these younger captains of industry and finance is the record of success, won through an idea early grasped and closely held, despite obstacles and reverses under which weaker men would crumple. Unlike the chieftains of the past generation, few of them are picturesque or spectacular personalities. Rather, they are hard-headed business men, practical graduates of the great school of experience.

THE MAGIC OF MOTOR-CAR FINANCE

The story of William C. Durant, head of the billion-dollar General Motors Corporation, is as interesting a tale of success as can be found in the musty records of the financial world. Durant, like Henry Ford, was one of the pioneers who realized that this was to be the age of the automobile. He was a carriage-manufacturer in a little Michigan town when the gasoline engine upset the market. Durant, with keen foresight, recognized the possibilities of the automobile when it was little more than a joke for cartoonists and a toy for the adventurous rich. To him it was only a question of a few years when the new form of traction would replace the horse in general work, and he saw that the time to get in on the ground floor was before others recognized the truth.

This year his associated companies have turned out some six hundred thousand motor-cars of all sorts. But it has been a struggle all the way up for Mr. Durant. Powerful interests opposed him when he came to Wall Street for money, and in 1915 he lost control of the corporation he had built, only to win it back in one of the most strenuous and exciting battles of dollars that the Street has ever witnessed.

CHIEFTAINS OF OIL AND TOBACCO

Harry F. Sinclair is another financial giant who blazed his own trail "up from nowhere." His father fondly hoped that he would be a druggist, but the mortar and pestle did not appeal to him, and he plunged heels over head into the oil game. To-day his name is known wherever oil is sold.

Incidentally it may be stated here that in these last few years the oil business has been no languorous bed of roses. It has been a slam-bang, throat-cutting affair, with every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost. Organization and cooperation with his lieutenants, Sinclair says, have been the secrets of his success.

Two years ago George J. Whelan, who founded the United Cigar Stores, and who nursed that famous chain of tobacco-shops from a nucleus of one little store in upper New York State to its present tremendous size, announced himself as having finished with business. He had money enough, he declared, and had decided to turn his interests over to his son, Sidney S. Whelan. Report placed his personal fortune at twenty-five million dollars.

Mr. Whelan found, however, that just sitting around did not suit him, and to-day he is back in the game. With James B. Duke, the former tobacco king, he is planning a chain of retail stores which will encircle the globe. Indeed, he now dominates the tobacco industry, and the stocks which back that industry, more completely even than did Mr. Duke in the days of the so-called Tobacco Trust. He has become to tobacco what Judge Gary is to steel.

THE FAR-FLUNG DU PONT INTERESTS

Another active factor in big business to-day is the Du Pont millions, multiplied many times by profits amassed in munition-making during the war. Corporations of almost every sort, producing commodities of almost every description, are backed by the fortune founded when Eleuthère Irénée Du Pont started manufacturing powder in

Delaware in 1802. His great-grandson, T. Coleman Du Pont, almost personally unknown in the financial district, sits in his office, high up in the Equitable Building,

Allan A. Ryan, son of Thomas Fortune Ryan, himself a power in Wall Street affairs, has developed rapidly into one of the Street's younger leaders within the last few

HARRY F. SINCLAIR, A SELF-MADE LEADER IN AMERICAN INDUSTRY AND FINANCE, PRESIDENT OF THE SINCLAIR OIL AND REFINING CORPORATION, ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL OF THE NEWER OIL COMPANIES

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and directs tremendous operations in the market. "Du Pont is buying control" has come to be a hackneyed phrase in Wall Street, and in several notable cases the report has been true.

years. Tall and spare, he displays many of the attributes and characteristics of his famous father, to whom he also bears a strong facial resemblance.

Allan Ryan, like his father, has the repu-

ALEXANDER V. OSTROM, OF THE LIBERTY NATIONAL BANK—MR. OSTROM, WHO CAME TO NEW YORK FROM THE NORTHWEST A FEW YEARS AGO, IS A SPECIALIST IN FINANCIAL RELATIONS WITH SCANDINAVIA

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tation of being a plunger. He has been variously interested in denting the typewriter combination, and in the manufacture of aircraft, of candy, of motor-cars, and of rubber. He has put through some big business combinations, is said to have had his life insurance canceled owing to his fondness for driving airplanes and high-powered cars, and appears to have thoroughly grasped the Wall Street idea—which is to make money.

LEADERS WHO HAVE LEFT THE STREET

The shifting tides of circumstance, bringing new and commanding figures to Wall Street each year, have left it the loser, recently, of two prominent figures, both undisputed leaders. One of them was

Frank A. Vanderlip, the banker; the other Bernard M. Baruch, the broker. Mr. Vanderlip, whose power in banking circles was exercised through the presidency of the National City Bank, has retired from business and is understood to be taking a long rest. Mr. Baruch, who for several years was a leader among the active operators on the Stock Exchange, announced after the completion of his war work that he would not return to Wall Street.

I have dealt briefly with a few of the men whose financial leadership to-day is unquestioned, and who sit firmly in the seats of the mighty. They are by no means all of the outstanding figures in that host of

ALLAN A. RYAN, SON OF THOMAS F. RYAN, AND ONE OF THE MOST ACTIVE OF THE YOUNGER LEADERS IN THE WORLD OF FINANCE—HE IS INTERESTED IN AIRCRAFT, MOTOR-CARS, RUBBER, AND OTHER BRANCHES OF INDUSTRY

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WILLIAM C. DURANT, WHO HAS FOUGHT HIS WAY TO THE FRONT AS HEAD OF THE GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION, AND WHOSE ASSOCIATED COMPANIES HAVE TURNED OUT THIS YEAR ABOUT SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND CARS

From a copyrighted photograph by Paul Thompson, New York

men, most of them still young, who hold the reins that guide financial and industrial America.

The Wall Street of to-day is not the Wall Street of yesterday. It is bigger, for one thing. It is broader, too. Its methods of conducting business have changed radically; and its new leaders have had a large hand in inaugurating the change.

So long as industry flourishes, so long as capital accumulates, so long as the race for wealth and success is keen, the battle

of dollars will continue. There is no armistice. Wall Street constantly calls to the front fresh and strong and alert men who are capable of handling large issues, of thinking straight and clearly in terms of millions.

The Great Suggestion

BY ROBERT SHANNON

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

BERNARDO the Great was not a man to eavesdrop, least of all upon a pair of lovers. That he chanced to be a witness and auditor of one of those intimate and painful scenes that blight the course of human affections was in no wise the result of any desire on his part.

It was somewhere between ten and eleven o'clock on one of those warm summer nights when the moon and the stars and the insidious fragrance of flowering gardens combine to lure the young of the species on to rambling perambulations along the twisting paths of life.

It was a night for the bright dreams of youth. The moon gave a rippling sheen of silver to the silent Mississippi as it slipped past the little old town of Cape Roubidoux, which hung on the bluff of the Missouri side of the river. From where he sat on a bench in the deep shadow of an elm in the court-house square, Bernardo gazed in placid meditation across the mile of water at the dark and tangled vegetation that fringes the low Illinois side. Somewhere down the river two side-wheelers passed each other, and the double blasts of salutation from their whistles sounded, in the distance, like moans from the ghosts of river packets long sunk and forgotten in the mud and silt of threescore years.

Masquerading under his own name of William Tickham Bowers, the professional exponent of the mystic art of hypnotism, legerdemain, and sleight of hand, was sojourning in Cape Roubidoux for a rest; a vacation from the vicissitudes of a hard season on the road with his own show. It had been a wearisome routine of small towns, small profits, and small satisfaction.

What he needed was a short spell of repose, of quiet, and he had been finding it for the past two weeks in the quaint, small town, where he passed simply as Mr. Bowers, of Chicago—a gentleman staying at the Upton House for a time in the interest of his health. Mr. Bowers had let it be known that he was rather run down from overwork, and was taking a rest.

Since he was the first health-seeker to recognize the salubrious advantages of Cape Roubidoux, he had come very quickly to be a marked man, and the inhabitants viewed him with kindly and hopeful interest. According to all reports from the Upton House, his appetite was fine, although he did show a tendency to sleeplessness in the fore part of the night. He seldom went to bed before midnight, preferring to spend the hours until that time in reading, strolling, or smoking black, aromatic cigars on his favorite bench in the square, taking in the beauty of the river and the splendor of the night.

Assuredly he was not a man to eavesdrop at that critical and solemn moment when Jessie Kinney decided that Joe Burke would never hoop her finger with a wedding-ring. Their low voices, as they approached, came to his ear faintly, but his whole attention was not attracted to the pair until they stopped beside the tree that shadowed his bench.

"It's no use of your talkin', Joe," the girl insisted firmly. "You can marry your blond-headed friend in St. Louis—your Mazie—if you like. You wasn't fair with me, and it's"—she paused a moment—"it's all off."

Perhaps a perfect gentleman would have coughed or shuffled his feet; but Bernardo had heard, through no fault of his own, that much of the conversation, and it

seemed to him the part of delicacy to keep silent.

Joe Burke, tall and straight, and as fair as a Viking, dropped his hand from the arm of the slender, dark girl at his side. His lips that usually had a humorous quirk at the ends were a set, straight line.

"I was workin' in that shoe-store up in St. Louis, tryin' to land a good job so I could take care of you proper," he said seriously. "It was lonesome of evenin's, and I did see her a few times, but I was on the level with you—all the time. I don't know why she wrote me that post-card."

A sound that resembled a sob came from the girl.

"Yes, but you carried it around in your pocket and dropped it where I happened to find it."

"I didn't mean to do that, Jessie—"

"Of course you didn't," she affirmed bitterly. "You wouldn't have had me know for the world. 'Hurry back to St. Louis, deary. Yours, with love and kisses, Mazie.' Oh, I'll never forget them words—never!"

"I didn't love her, and I never could," Joe protested. "She just happened to be the cashier in the store, and I—"

"But you did kiss her!"

"That ain't the question. You and me wasn't engaged. We was merely correspondin'. Didn't I take my two weeks' vacation to come down here and ask you, 'stead of goin' up to Chicago? Ain't I thought and dreamed and planned about you for years?"

Jessie shook her head positively.

"We've talked that all over all evenin'. You ain't steady, and it's better I should find it out now than later."

"And after me savin' four hundred and fifty dollars!" he exclaimed reproachfully.

"The money ain't nothin'," she said sadly. "It's the faith and confidence a woman has in a man that counts."

"Aw, you're just a little jealous, honey."

"It ain't jealousy. It's just a busted-up dream, that's all."

"Honey, I got a ring here in my pocket."

"It's not for me, Joe. Take it back to—to her."

There was a tone of irritation and outraged justice and non-comprehension in his voice:

"Do you mean that, Jessie?"

"I do, Joe. Please take me home and—"

"All right!" It was a quick, decisive reply.

II

THEY moved away, and Bernardo seemed to sink deeper into the shadow. For an hour longer he sat pondering on the utter idiocy of young people, and the whirlpools and snags that always threaten and sometimes capsize the frail bark of romance as it glides along treacherous channels. As he reflected, that which was Bowers within him gained a temporary mastery over the suave and worldly Bernardo, and he found his heart swelling with emotions and recollections of a past of his own—a might-have-been memory that aroused and threatened to haunt him.

"A man's will is master of his own thoughts," he told himself. "Therefore, I'll go back to the hotel and sleep it off."

Such thoughts, however, are not to be banished in a flash, even by those master minds of mental force who are able, sometimes, to dominate the will of others by the penetrating glance of the luminous eye, the mystic passes of the hand, or the hammering force of an oft-repeated suggestion battering its way into a receptive brain.

As Bernardo strolled down the principal street near noon the next morning, something weighed upon him, a restlessness and a depression that urged him to be on the move again; to seek the narcotic peace that lies in the open road for those condemned to wandering. Too long already had he lingered in Cape Roubidoux. The man Bowers was getting troublesome.

His stately figure progressed leisurely along. To the eye, Bernardo was impressive. Tall and gaunt, with a lean face, and black hair that reached almost to his collar, he looked, as he was, a man of strong personality. There was strength in his long jaw, and in his dark, compelling eyes there was a light of much understanding. Under other circumstances of birth and environment, and with, perhaps, a few delicate differences in character composition, he might have ranked as a great leader of men.

In the two weeks he had spent in the river town, he had, without any effort or even any desire, established himself as a popular favorite. There were few who passed the distinguished visitor, always clad in spotless Palm Beach, without a nod of greeting or a word.

"YOU MAY PASS THE WORD AROUND TOWN THAT YOU'VE BOOKED A SHOW LIKE THIS TOWN NEVER SAW BEFORE"

By the time he had reached the end of the first block, he had acquired in his train two little girls and a small boy, who frolicked beside him and hung onto his hands with their warm little palms.

He paused a moment at the corner and raised his Panama hat with a grand air to Miss Muriel Boland, the milliner, who smiled pleasantly at him as she passed.

Ash Clements, the expressman, whose rickety vehicle was always hitched around the corner, came out of the Smoke House with a stogy between his teeth and stopped to flick playfully at the legs of the youngsters with his disreputable buggy-whip. When the children had squealingly placed Bernardo between themselves and the menacing whip, the expressman spoke to the showman with hearty affability, marked by just the proper shade of deference.

"Your health gettin' better right along, Mr. Bowers?" he asked. "You're lookin' mighty husky for a sick man these days."

There was a kind of senatorial dignity in the reply.

"Getting much better every day, Clements. I'll be wanting you to haul my baggage down to the station before long. Perhaps I'll leave to-night."

He passed along into the next block and was hailed by a call from the ground-floor office of Thomas H. Wilfrey, real estate and farm-loans.

"Just a minute, Mr. Bowers," the squat and amiable Wilfrey said, coming bareheaded out onto the sidewalk. "I wanted to speak to you about the dinner of the Mercantile Club next Wednesday night at the Odd-Fellows' Hall. Like to have you come up and join us. Thought maybe you'd enjoy it. We always have a darn good feed and some good speeches, too."

It was a whole-hearted invitation. Bernardo acknowledged it for its worth, saying he would be delighted, unless called away, to attend. At the corner he halted and gazed with appreciation up and down the length of street. It was a delightful place, he told himself, a back eddy, perhaps, but with enough of the pulsating current of life running through it to keep away stagnation.

A girl passed across the way, slender and dark. A young man stepped from the corner drug-store and raised his straw hat. If she saw him she failed to recognize him, and Bernardo's quick eye detected, he fancied, an upward tilt of her chin.

It came back to him suddenly—the scene in the court-house square. He was human enough to feel a pang for both of them—a pity for them, that they had not enough wisdom to know they were tampering with their own futures, stupidly and stubbornly, endangering the substantial and enduring happiness they might build together. There came an impulse to follow after them, to stop them and tell them in plain words, but of course it was only a momentary urge. The hypnotist realized too well the futility of such an attempt. Its only effect would be to widen the gap between them.

III

A HAND was placed on his arm, and he turned and beheld beside him the cheery face of little Mrs. Omar Rogers, who, despite her sixty-five years, her white hair, and her old-style black turban with its ribboned strings, had still much of the joy of youth in her sparkling eyes.

"Mr. Bowers," she said, in the cordial manner of the small town, "I want to ask you a favor."

His hat came off and he bowed.

"Anything you like," he offered gallantly, with a vague recollection that he had seen Mrs. Rogers one Sunday morning at the Methodist Episcopal (South) church.

"I've been awfully worried," the little woman explained rather nervously. "It's about the entertainment on the church lawn to-morrow night for the benefit of our pastor. We arranged for the ice-cream and cake all right, but our program is kind of wabbly. Four of the young ladies are going to sing "Ben Bolt" and "Sweet Genevieve." Then Willie Harrison—he's only six years old—is going to recite a piece, and that about lets us out."

A gladsome light came into the eye of the showman. Let it never be said that Bernardo the Great declined the spot-light, either on or off the stage.

"Madam," he said grandly, "let your worries cease. You've come to the right place for help. You might just as well pass the word around town that you've booked a show like this town never saw before."

For a moment Mrs. Rogers was puzzled.

"I was thinking that you might make us a little speech—you know you've got a good flow of language. Or maybe you might recite some of Riley's poems for the children—"

Bernardo, however, knew little of the poetry that men set down. But he did know a great deal about the art of starting an audience gaping, and the old and instinctive delight of the actor at the prospect of applause began to flame.

"Don't worry about my part of the program, madam," he urged. "You asked me if I can entertain 'em. I can. I can probably put up a better one-man show than anybody in the whole Mississippi Valley. Pardon me if I seem to talk about myself, but when it comes to the mystic art of sleight of hand or legerdemain—well, my dear madam, you're talking to a real prestidigitator. Can I entertain 'em? Well, madam—"

He paused modestly. Mrs. Rogers, somewhat surprised at her own good fortune and at Bernardo's language, batted her eyes.

"Yes, my dear madam," Bernardo went on. "I like your charming little city. You've all been mighty nice to me during my stay here, and I'll be happy to even the obligation. What time do you ring up—I mean, when does the affair begin?"

She told him he had better be on hand at eight o'clock.

"But I had no idea you were so accomplished," she murmured dazedly.

A kindly smile was on the face of mountebank. There was a warm feeling in his

breast for the eager little woman. Why, he'd put on the whole act for her! In his three trunks at the hotel he had paraphernalia enough to keep 'em amused for an hour and a half if necessary.

"I don't know how we can ever repay you, Mr. Bowers—"

"Madam, your humble servant needs no repayment when he labors in a worthy cause. On the church lawn at eight. Rest assured, I'll be there." He bowed again, and his new impresario moved away, murmuring her thanks.

Why not? What do a man's gifts and talents avail him if they do not bring some slight joy to those about him? Of the many paths he had trod, Bernardo had found that none held such satisfaction for him as the straight and simple one. He had enjoyed occasional excursions upon it, yet he could never quite bring himself to follow it to the end. There were times when the hectic lure of other and more devious ways had the stronger pull.

His mind considered rapidly the number and variety of tricks and illusions he might perform at the fête. The coin tricks, of course, would be suitable; the plucking of the silver dollar from the empty air, its disappearance, and its final extraction from the ear of a small boy from the audience. Since it was a church affair, he judged it would be well to eliminate the usual manipulation of playing-cards.

Working at close range of his audience, he would stick to the simpler things—coins, handkerchiefs, rings, the creation of paper flowers from nowhere. He could not do anything along the mind-reading line, for he had no partner, and there was little time to coach a confederate.

As he strolled slowly back toward the hotel, Mrs. Rogers progressed rather more rapidly in the opposite direction, and later retraced her steps until she had covered the length of Main Street, and had spread the news that Mr. Bowers, the gentleman from Chicago, was to be the star of the lawn social.

IV

The balance of the day passed rather pleasantly for Bernardo, what with delving into his trunks for apparatus, and making the needful preparations for an evening of magic.

For two others it passed with lonesome dragging. Jessie Kinney, despite an invitation from Bert Armrod, the debonair drug clerk, to attend the movies, found her peace of mind shattered and the hours monotonous.

Joe Burke lived through his bluest day. His mother's table failed to tempt his appetite, and when the dusk of the evening fell he found it impossible to stay at home. It may be believed that the thought that he might find eternal solace in the bosom of the great Mississippi occurred to him, but it is certain that he rejected the idea. It is more probable to suppose that, in his distress, he conceived the plan of making a brave show of indifference, for he was seen on the streets as the movie patrons began drifting toward the Odéon.

A careful observer would have noticed that his shoes were highly polished; that the necktie he wore was of a brilliant hue, and that his straw hat was perched recklessly on the back of his head. Dropping into the Beehive Ice-Cream Parlor, he carelessly ordered a frosted banana sundae, price twenty-five cents plus the war tax, and consumed it with the manner of a man drowning his sorrow in drink.

It so happened that Jessie and Bert Armrod stopped in at the same establishment on the way to the movies, seated themselves at an adjoining table, and ordered ice-cream soda. Joe beckoned to Sim Gibbs, the fountain boy.

"Bring me another frosted banana sundae, and splash a few cherries and some whipped cream on it," he commanded in princely style.

Sim hesitated. "Them things don't come on a frosted banana," he protested.

Joe eyed him with a scowl so terrible the youth quailed visibly.

"You hear my order—now you fill it. When I want a thing I get it, understand. What do I care about cost?"

His vociferous attitude induced rapid service. A hasty glance assured him that it was possible for Jessie to observe him in a mirror as he ate, and so tense were his feelings that he despatched the frozen delicacy before the object of his affection had finished even half of her ice-cream soda.

"Fill it up again!"

He gave the order moodily, as though his thoughts were miles away. Sim Gibbs, for the first time in his career, served three frosted bananas in succession to a single patron.

Jessie, aghast at the terrible result of the

quarrel, urged Bert to hurry and finish his drink. She wanted to leave, and she did, but as she passed out the door it was with the wild voice of Joe Burke ringing in her ears as he ordered yet another portion of the frigid confection. She knew in her heart of hearts that it was unrequited love that was driving her former sweetheart to dissipation.

A friendly hand fell on the shoulder of the unhappy swain. Bernardo had risen from a back table and was departing.

"Young man," he said in solemn tones, "wine is a mockery, but there are even more dangerous vices. Listen to the advice of one who has had experience—don't let yourself be dragged down to the grave of an ice-cream drunkard."

He left the place with the air of a prophet. Even Joe, racked as he now was with torment of mind and stomach, was impressed. Patrons at other tables gazed in respect at the man who had uttered such weighty words. For a moment Bernardo had taken the spot-light. It was his way.

At the early part of the social the following night he was again the leading figure, throwing the minister into a total eclipse. With Mrs. Rogers guiding him about from group to group, he overcame all diffidence in his less worldly friends, charming them with his poise and good nature. For Mrs. Rogers it was a triumph.

Japanese lanterns hung from the trees made a festive atmosphere. Here and there at the edges of the lawn there were pine tables and chairs where ice-cream and cake might be had, served by rosy-cheeked young women in dainty aprons. There was a booth also where red lemonade was dispensed, and there was much clinking of small silver. It was one of those nights of nights, with the entire youth and beauty, age and chivalry of Cape Roubidoux present.

As it neared nine, Deacon Ferguson, rotund and red of face, mounted the rough platform that had been erected and announced that Willie Harrison would recite the well-known poem, "I'll Never Use Tobacco." Willie, tremendously collared and starched, succeeded in reaching the occupants of the first four rows of seats with the information that little *Robert Reed* would never use tobacco, for it was a filthy weed—the word weed riming with the name Reed.

There was much applause, and after considerable pressure from his delighted mother, Willie remounted and began:

"Hark, hark, the dogs do bark; the beggars are coming to town."

Unfortunately he forgot the remaining lines, and since no amount of prompting seemed likely to jog his faulty memory, his mother beckoned to him and he descended, again amid great applause.

The quartet of young women followed, and their rendition of old-time songs poured out with ringing sweetness on the night air. Their fresh young voices, clear and strong, moved Bernardo, and he felt his heart swelling in appreciation of the old and simple and wholesome things of life. When they sang "Annie Laurie," he caught sight of Jessie Kinney in the second row, and he thought he saw the flash of a tear on her lash. His eyes moved about, searching for Joe. He saw him sitting apart, with a face like a tragic mask.

V

THE quartet finished, and Deacon Ferguson drew near Bernardo for a whispered consultation before making his third introductory speech.

"Now what is it you're going to do?" he asked confidentially.

"Legerdemain," Bernardo told him. "You know, trick stuff."

"Legerdemain," repeated the deacon. "Ah, yes."

"I can give you some facts about myself and—"

"Entirely unnecessary," the churchman replied.

He had the honor and pleasure of introducing a stranger in Cape Roubidoux, a gentleman who in a short time had won the esteem and affection of all who had met him. The gentleman had kindly consented to add his efforts to the program.

The speaker found it not disagreeable to talk in public. For years he had cherished a secret thought that he possessed the gifts of a great orator. Bernardo gave him a talking point.

"Need I tell you," he asked, "that this gentleman is one who is gifted with the talents of the fabled seventh son of a seventh daughter? This gentleman has carried the art of magic farther into the realms of whimsy and fancy than any one who has preceded him.

"All ages have produced their great magicians. It has remained for this age and

this country to produce the master wizard, the seer of seers. Perhaps you have, in your fancy, longed to witness the performances of the wonder-workers of the East, the fakirs of India, or the black magic of the high priests of Egypt. It is possible that there has been a poignant regret that one had not been privileged to live in the age of a Merlin; that one was born too late to see the deft and artful illusions of a Cagliostro in the streets of medieval Rome —that one came into life too late to stand wide-eyed before Salambo or Robert Houdin, the original. Friends and fellow citizens, still your vain yearnings."

Deacon Ferguson checked his speech and glanced toward Bernardo, who was watching him appreciatively.

"To-night I have the extreme pleasure of informing you that we have with us an honored guest whose position is side by side—nay, above—that of any ever occupied by magician, irrespective of period or history.

"We have, I repeat, a man who makes the impossible possible, who transcends the established laws of nature, who works wonders beyond the power of human intelligence to divine. A man who plunges into the mysterious realm of the elusive fourth dimension, who defies all known laws of physics and science, who will produce for your entertainment illusions that have puzzled and defeated the best scientific brains of five continents. In another age, in the days of Salem witchcraft, he would have been burned at the stake. But in our enlightened times, we stand humbly and admiringly before this genius who proudly takes his rank with the great torch-bearers of all time.

"If you ask me to give you the clue to the most simple of his feats I am forced to shake my head and tell you that it is not within the power of my mind to fathom even the art of his smallest gesture. Nay, in this age of miracles, of the aircraft and the submarine, which we can all understand in theory, we must acknowledge that we stand dumfounded before this wizard. Stopping short only of the miracles of Holy Writ, he will now begin a series of feats unequaled in the history of the black art; surpassing the wonders of the 'Arabian Nights' and touching the nether edge of human understanding.

"Mr.—BOW-ERS!"

The applause was torrential, and as Bernardo ascended to the stage he was bewildered himself at the vivid introduction.

"And he invented all that out of the one word legerdemain," he said to himself. "What if I really had told him something to work on? This guy's the world's greatest press-agent, and if I had him working for me I'd have the whole world believing it. Some spieler!"

He faced his audience with professional assurance, drawing a handkerchief from the upper pocket of his coat and carelessly rubbing it between his palms.

"Now," he commenced, "if any gentleman in the audience will lend me a twenty-dollar gold piece I'll promise to see that it follows the silk handkerchief." He spread his hands apart—the cloth had vanished.

There was a gasp of surprise. His first trick had been sudden and unexpected. For half an hour trick followed trick in rapid sequence, to the accompaniment of a merry flow of quip and jest.

Bernardo had promised to entertain, and he was putting on almost everything he knew. The suit he wore was apparently quite conventional, but in reality it was a labyrinth of secret pockets, springs, rubber cords, and concealed openings.

He reached into the air and plucked paper flowers from nowhere. He thrust a fountain pen in one ear and pulled it out of the other. Miraculously he produced three billiard balls between his outstretched fingers, caused them to disappear, reappear, and finally vanish down his throat. Reaching delicately into his mouth he extracted yard after yard of many-colored ribbon. In full view of the audience he passed a half-dollar through his hand, from the back to the palm. Borrowing a hat from a man in the audience, he lifted a squirming white rabbit from it. A small boy from the front row was induced to sneeze a shower of dimes and quarters into the hat. Then, to prove that the money was genuine, Bernardo turned it over to Mrs. Rogers to add to the receipts of the festival.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I believe I can interest you still further. You have seen that the hand is quicker than the eye."

His audience, carried away with amazement and surprise at his cleverness, listened to him with strained eagerness. They were hungry for more, they expected more, and were eager to follow his every word.

"But more wonderful still are the emotional disturbances and reactions that manifest themselves to those of us who have psychic feeling." Bernardo was not smiling now.

"YOUNG MAN," HE SAID, "LISTEN TO THE ADVICE OF ONE WHO HAS HAD EXPERIENCE — DON'T LET YOURSELF BE DRAGGED DOWN TO THE GRAVE OF AN ICE-CREAM DRUNKARD"

"Would you see more?" he asked, bending forward theatrically.

VI

So quickly had his change of attitude swayed the audience that in the chorus of "yeses" that went up there was a note of nervousness, of suspense. Every eye was fixed on him as though a miracle were expected.

"Great cosmic forces are all about us to-night."

He tossed his hair back with a shake of his head. His gaze was leveled off over the heads of the crowd and out into space. Apparently he spoke from deep inspiration. In fact, it was nothing of the kind. He had glanced at Joe Burke a moment or two before and had resolved impulsively to make a last throw, a spectacular effort to bring some consolation to the suffering lover. An audience properly worked up to a state of tension will swallow almost anything, and Bernardo gave way to the temptation to risk a big play.

"This brain of mine, as sensitive and as finely tuned as a wireless instrument, feels

the tremors of great forces," he went on extemporaneously. "Communication has been established with other brains here present by means of those delicate waves of ether which no man understands.

"I sense a great battle of emotions going on in our midst. The destiny of two human lives is being decided to-night! It is in the air! The great emotion of human love, the vital spark of time and eternity, as invisible as the Infinite, yet more powerful than the tides of the seas, surges about us. For these two people the great happiness or the great cataclysm approaches!"

Back in the brain of the showman this thought was running: "I've got 'em going —I've got 'em going. Now's the time to put it over."

Realizing the value of suspense, he stood silently, with his eyes closed. Then, with a slight start, he seemed to awake.

"It is not for me to make the great suggestion that will bring these mighty forces together. That must come from within the soul of those concerned." He was speaking rapidly.

"But it is my plain duty, as I see it, to point the way, to aid just a little, to make the path smoother, and to clear the atmosphere for the high purpose of human existence. I will bring a dozen of you on the platform to assist me, through the combined forces of your concentrated thoughts, working in harmony with my own."

Without hesitation, and with an unquestioned authority, his arm, working like a pump-handle, pointed out six young men and six young women.

"You and you and you and you!"

It was at random, for aught any one knew, yet when those selected had filed obediently onto the stage, Joe Burke was among them, and so was Jessie Kinney.

"In order that there will be no embarrassment of any one, I will ask the young men to blindfold themselves."

So completely had they all been dominated by Bernardo that there was no protest. Six handkerchiefs were produced from six hip-pockets, and when the eyes were bandaged, Bernardo himself gave each a final inspection.

"And now I must ask the young ladies to consent also to be blindfolded. There is no trick to this, so none need fear."

A pleasant thrill of satisfaction tingled within him as he recalled that he had a half-dozen thin handkerchiefs of Japanese silk still concealed in his coat-sleeve.

A circling wave of his arm, a twist of his wrist, and a snap of his fingers produced the handkerchiefs, one at a time, out of the air.

"Why buy 'em at the dry-goods store when you can get 'em this way?" he asked the audience pleasantly.

When the young women were blindfolded securely, Bernardo again dropped his facetious manner and tied a handkerchief around his own eyes.

"In this little group the current of love rushes madly, wildly seeking its proper channel," he said impressively. "Human error has interposed to thwart it, yet I feel its force myself, sweeping through my nerves like a charge from a battery."

With both arms outstretched he faced the blinded dozen.

"I feel it! It is as plain as the breeze from an electric fan!"

He began walking up and down the line with his hands groping from shoulder to shoulder. In front of one youth he paused, started to move away, and hesitated.

"No," he said, "it is not here, although there radiates a current of warm affection. But it is not love, it is not the all-powerful, galvanic force. Bear with me just a moment. I will find it."

He moved along, halted in front of Joe Burke, left him, and returned. Suddenly, he clamped both hands down on the shoulders of the trembling figure.

"I have found it!" Bernardo cried. "Come!"

He led Joe to the center of the stage.

"Now for the woman!"

Slowly turning about, he faced himself toward the six girls.

"From among these young women I catch the responsive thrill of a great and eternal love. Among them there is the true mate of this man. Let me seek!"

There was complete silence in the audience and on the platform as Bernardo moved along in front of the girls. Artfully he stopped before each of them in turn, seeming to weigh great vital forces. For a moment it appeared as though he were going to select Marian Powell, blond and buxom, but he passed her, worked his way to the end of the line, retraced his steps, took Jessie Kinney gently by the hand, and led her to the front and center, where he placed her hand in Joe's. He

BERNARDO HAD PROMISED TO ENTERTAIN, AND HE WAS PUTTING ON ALMOST EVERYTHING HE KNEW

removed the handkerchief from his own eyes.

"Down through the ages it was ever thus!" His best declamatory tones rose with a burst of feeling.

"Blinded as we all are—without eyes in darkness, there comes the compelling union of two souls as surely as the bar of steel seeks the magnet. For this man there can only be one woman. She is small and dark, tender and true and loving. She will be a faithful wife and a lifelong companion.

"And for the woman, there is also but one tall and fair life partner. His character is revealed to me as in a vision. Brave, noble, capable of the greatest tenderness as well as the highest achievement."

Bernardo lifted his eyes, and through the lacelike branches of a tree he caught the glow of the mounting moon in the velvet sky. Off to the south and the west a bright star burned with its age-old fire. A soft breeze laden with midsummer warmth fanned over the lawn. In the hush that fell the rising cadence of the cricket caught his ear.

The spell of a wondrous night and awe at the mysteries of the love of man for woman gripped the audience in a moment

of silence that was broken only by the nervous cough of a woman in the back row of seats. A dozen faces turned toward her reprovingly, as though she had committed a sacrilege.

A sudden feeling of humiliation hit Bernardo. He started to speak and his throat was dry.

"After all," he said, and he meant it, "life is beautiful. Love, too, is beautiful, and sometimes we feel as helpless as a little child when we stand in its great and mighty presence."

He stopped again.

The fingers that held Jessie Kinney's hand tightened, and Joe Burke slowly removed the handkerchief from his eyes. Very gently he unbandaged the eyes of the girl. For a moment she stood, with her head bowed.

"Little honey—"

Jessie slowly lifted her head, and the gaze that met her lover's was glorious and unafraid.

With three hundred pairs of eyes watching them they were more alone, more together than they had ever been before in their lives.

"Little honey—" he said again as she went into his arms.

Something seemed to snap with the audience, and there was a wild, joyous symphony of reverberating cheers—a commingling of many voices in an unrestrained benediction.

Deacon Ferguson climbed up beside the pale Bernardo.

"You did it, Mr. Bowers!" he cried. "You did it—a miracle! It is nothing else. A miracle!"

In after years Joe Burke frequently asserted he knew it was Jessie who had stood beside him. Her mother had always scented her daughter's clothes with old lavender. And as for Jessie—well, she knew it was Joe all the time. Her hand naturally felt so much at home in his.

THE FAITH OF NATURE

Of human folk what need have I,
If I but have the sea for friend,
The mountains and the morning sky,
And foliage vast and meadows green,
The moon and all the stars to spend,
And pillared space on which to lean?

For man's and woman's best avail
Is slender as a swaying reed,
Nor all their love and faith prevail
To help their fellows in their need;
Nor are they good to hear or see
As song of bird or shape of tree.

Oh, man that talks and nothing saith
His journey through from birth to death—
Man, with his little deeds and dooms,
His piteous parodies of power;
And woman, in her loveliest hour,
Fair only till the wild rose blooms,
Or the strange almond breaks in flower!

More profit me the winds and rains,
The company of stars and streams,
Than all the lore of little brains
That only rob me of my dreams.

Richard Le Gallienne

The Bankruptcy of Socialism

THE PRESENT STATUS OF EUROPE DEMONSTRATES MOST IMPRESSIVELY THAT THE SOCIALIZATION OF INDUSTRY RESULTS IN A DISASTROUS LOSS OF PRODUCTION

By Herbert C. Hoover

IN reviewing the impressions that I have gained during my service in Europe since the armistice, two convictions are dominant in my mind. The first comes from contact with the stupendous ferment and revolution in which Europe is attempting to find solution for all its social ills by practical experiments in socialism. My conviction is that this whole philosophy is bankrupting itself by its startling effect on the production of industrial commodities, which—at least until the recent realization of that bankruptcy—it reduced below the needs of existence.

My second conviction is not new, but has been greatly strengthened. I have come to appreciate much more fully to what an enormous distance we of America, during the century and a half of our national existence, have grown away from Europe in our outlook on life, our relations toward our neighbors, and our social and political ideals. The supreme importance of this Americanism permits us neither to allow the use of this community for experiments in the treatment of social diseases, nor to abandon our moral leadership in restoring order in the world.

The cataclysm of social change in Europe is the result of a long cumulation of social as well as political wrongs. It is no sudden afterthought of war. Its forces were projected into actual realization by the collapse of the war, the breakdown of political institutions that had preceded it, and the misery that has flowed from it.

Our soil is not so fertile as that of Europe to many of these growths, because we have a larger social conscience. We have not the vivid class and economic distinctions of Europe, nor have we the depth of misery out of which these things can crystallize. Nevertheless, in these days of intimate communication, social forces are rapid in their penetration and social diseases are quick in universal infection.

The general revolution of Europe during the last century, starting with the French Revolution, profoundly changed the whole social order of the world. While the spiritual impulse of that revolution was the demand for political liberty, there was also a great economic impulse, primarily in regard to the division of the land, and one of its fruits was the better distribution of wealth among the agricultural population.

Since that time an enormous expansion of mechanical industrialism has been superimposed upon all agricultural states, with a large increase in urban populations. The economic impulse of the revolution to-day is the demand for a better division of the wealth produced by this industrialism, and the agitation now arises mainly from the urban populations.

These vast masses of humanity in Europe have long been groping for the way to a greater equality of opportunity and a better distribution of the results of industrial production. In recent years the movement has been dominated by Marxian socialism. Broadly, the methods used have taken two

EDITORIAL NOTE—Mr. Hoover's work during and since the war has given him the right to speak with unimpeachable authority on social and political conditions in the belligerent countries. On September 16, shortly after returning from his service as director of the American Relief Administration in Europe, he gave a most interesting summary of his impressions in a speech delivered at a banquet of the American Society of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, in New York. With the omission of passages describing the nature and extent of the American effort on behalf of the war-torn countries, the substance of the main portion of the address is reproduced in this article.

HERBERT C. HOOVER, FORMERLY CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION FOR RELIEF IN BELGIUM, UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATOR, AND DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN RELIEF ADMINISTRATION IN EUROPE

From his latest photograph—Copyrighted by Paul Thompson.

forms—the Bolshevik form, through which there has been overnight communization of all property, and the milder form of legislative nationalization of industry. I believe we are now in position to take some stock of these experiments, and to form some judgment of their adequacy as solutions of what I believe every liberal-minded man regards as a pressing problem — the better division of industrial production.

We require only a superficial survey to see that the outstanding and startling economic phenomenon of Europe to-day is its demoralized industrial production. Of the four hundred and fifty millions of people in Europe, a rough estimate indicates that at least one hundred millions cannot be supported on the present basis of production.

The productivity of Europe in prewar times had behind it the intensive stimulus of a high state of economic discipline. During the war, the intensive organization of economy and regulation of consumption, the patriotic stimulus to greater exertion, and the enlistment of women in productive labor partially balanced the diversion of man-power to war and munition-making. Both the prewar and the war impulses have now been lost, and productivity has steadily decreased since the armistice.

It is true that other factors have been at work, but the chief cause of this diminution in production, with the resultant shortage of supplies and increased cost of living, must be sought in the widespread social ferment. In this ferment the advocates of socialism or communism have claimed to be alone in speaking for the downtrodden, to be alone in presenting remedies, to be the single voice of liberalism.

RUSSIA'S RUINOUS EXPERIMENT

We may examine these phenomena a little more closely. In Russia we have a great country in which the population, with the exception of a small minority, were comparatively well fed, warmly clothed, and warmly housed. They were subject to the worst of political tyranny, were deliberately steeped in ignorance and superstition, yet their productivity was sufficient to enable them to provide themselves with the primary comforts and to export more foodstuffs than the United States. Socialism was brought in overnight at the hands of a small minority of intellectual dilettanti and criminals, and this tyranny of a minority, more terrible even than the old, has now had nearly two years in which to effect the conversion of the much-criticised competitive system into the elysium of communism.

To-day, two-thirds of the railways and three-fourths of the rolling-stock controlled by the present rulers of Russia are out of operation. The whole population is without the normal comforts of life, and is plunged into the most grievous famine of centuries. The people are dying at the rate of hundreds of thousands monthly from starvation and disease. The capital city has diminished in population from nearly two millions to less than six hundred thousand. Prices have risen to fantastic levels. The streets of every city and village have run with the blood of executions; nor have these executions been confined to the so-called middle and upper classes, for the opposition of the workmen and farmers to the existing régime has brought them also to the firing-squad in appalling numbers.

If we examine the recent proclamations of this group of mixed idealists and murderers, we find a radical change in their economic and social ideas. They have abandoned the socialization of the land, for they find that the farmer will not produce for payment in high-flown and altruistic phrases. They have reestablished a differential wage, in an attempt to stimulate exertion and to arouse the ambition of skilled labor. They have established a state savings-bank, to encourage production through making provision for the worker's family and for his old age. They are offering fabulous salaries for men capable of directing large agencies of production.

In fact, while in the midst of flowery verbal endeavor to maintain that they are still socialists, they are endeavoring to restore individual ownership of property and of the results of labor. The very high priest of socialism is to-day vainly endeavoring to save his people from total destruction by summoning back the forces of production. The apologists of this debacle are telling us that it is due to the Allied blockade, and to various other obstacles; but any one with a rudimentary knowledge of Russia knows that they did have within their borders ample supplies of food, coal, oil, wool, cotton, and metals, and factories wherein to work up the raw materials, and that the deficiency has been in human effort.

We could take another example of Bolshevism in the experiment of Bela Kun and

his colleagues in Budapest. The distinction between the situation in Hungary and that in Russia was that in the former they were dealing with a population of higher intelligence and of better average education, and it required but three months for the working people of Budapest to realize the fearful abyss into which they had been plunged. It was due to the efforts of the Budapest trade-unions that the Bolshevists were thrown out of the Hungarian capital.

These are the extreme points where socialism has had its opportunity for immediate and wholesale application, according to all the precepts of its advocates. Elsewhere in Europe socialism has proceeded through established institutions, and we may briefly examine the results here also.

SOCIALIZATION AND ITS RESULTS

During the war, large measures were taken on both sides of the front to secure the mobilization of production and distribution to its maximum use in the struggle. There was effective socialization of vast sections of industry. To-day, in many places, these measures are being continued and extended by governments anxious to maintain, even at the sacrifice of economic safety, the stability of institutions threatened by revolutionary minorities.

Yet here again the same prime weakness has proved itself. The partial success of such measures in war-time was due to the great patriotic impulse of the conflict. Those who conducted these large operations were men whose initiative and capacity had been selected by the competitive system. The impulses of war have been lost, and these organizations, of constantly decreasing efficiency even in war-time, now face disaster from a further reduction in productivity.

There is no better example of this than the coal industry of Europe. Omitting Russia, the production of coal has fallen from a rate of six hundred million tons per annum at the armistice to a recent rate of four hundred and fifty million tons. In modern life the coal industry is the very life-blood of the state. Among all the industries it has proved itself the most susceptible to these influences, and production to-day is at such an ebb as to jeopardize the entire social fabric.

All these various sorts of socialism are based on one primary conception—that the productivity of the human being can be maintained under the impulse of altruism, and that the selection of the particular human for his most productive performance can be made by some superimposed bureaucracy. Their weakness is the disregard of the normal, primary, day-to-day impulse of the human animal—self-interest for himself or for his family and home, with a certain addition of altruism varying with his racial instinct and his degree of intelligence. They also fail to take into account the fact that there is only one adequate selective agent for human abilities in that infinite specialization of mind and body necessary to maintain the output of the intricate machinery of production, and that is the primary school of competition.

My emphatic conclusion from all these observations is, therefore, that socialism as a philosophy of possible human application is bankrupt. With rivers of blood and an infinity of suffering, it has proved itself to be an economic and spiritual fallacy.

AMERICA NEED NOT FOLLOW EUROPE

I believe it was necessary for the world to have this demonstration. Great theoretic and emotional ideas have arisen before in the history of mankind, and their failure has deluged the world with disaster. A purely philosophical view might be that these experiences are necessary to humanity, groping for something better. It is not necessary, however, that we of the United States, now that we have witnessed the result in Europe, should plunge our own population into the same miseries by making our country a laboratory for experiment in foreign social diseases.

Bankruptcy of the socialist idea, however, does not relieve us from the necessity of finding a solution of the primary question which underlies all this discontent. That primary question is the better division of the products of industry and the steady development of higher productivity. If reaction is to be prevented, the failure of the socialist idea should return the guardianship of this problem from the radical world to the liberal world of moderate men, working upon the safe foundations of experience.

The paramount business of every American to-day is to discover a solution of this question, but the solution must be worked out by Americans, in a practical American way, based upon American ideas and the American philosophy of life. An American substitute is needed for the disintegrating

theories of Europe. It must be founded on our national instincts and upon the normal development of our national institutions.

It must be founded, too, upon the fundamental fact that all the elements of this nation—the farmer, the industrial worker, the professional man, the employer — are absolutely dependent upon one another in the task of maximum production and of the better distribution of products. It must be founded upon the maximum exertion of every individual within his physical ability, and upon the reduction of waste, both nationally and individually.

We can well see in Europe a vivid confirmation of the fundamental economic principle that the standard of living and the cost of living are the direct quotients of the amount of commodities produced; that we must secure a maximum production of the industrial machine if we wish to see an advance in our people's standard of living, and even if we wish to keep our population alive.

The application of this proposition must, however, stand several tests. A maximum production can only be obtained under conditions that protect and stimulate the physical and intellectual well-being of the producer. We shall never remedy justifiable discontent until we eradicate the misery which the ruthlessness of individualism has imposed upon a minority.

If I were thinking aloud, I would say at once that this maximum production cannot be obtained without giving a voice in the administration of production to all sections of the community concerned in the specific problem; that it cannot be obtained by the domination of any one element.

I would say that the human race had advanced its standards of productivity, and therefore of living, through the growth of an extraordinarily intricate organization of production and distribution based upon stimulation of the individual by the rewards offered to him. I would say that increased production cannot be obtained from the destruction or sudden disturbance of this delicate and intricate organization. I would say that the road lies along the better division of the more exorbitant profits that arise from these processes and that have accumulated from them.

When I speak of better division of profits, I do not refer particularly to profit-sharing schemes, but to the broad issue of the whole social product. Some men are comparatively overpaid and many are comparatively underpaid for the service they render to the community. Our organization in many aspects is not all that we could desire, but it is the best we have been able to evolve during thousands of years, and the destruction of the established processes, or of the organization which conducts them, has been demonstrated to be a sure road to destitution and fearful loss of life.

It is not that we, to-day, have suddenly awakened to this necessity for a better distribution of profits. The social conscience of our country has been manifesting itself continuously concerning this matter for many years. We have in the United States to-day a better division of wealth and a greater equality of opportunity than any other nation in the world, and we have therefore a better foundation upon which to build. At the same time, there is reason for discontent in the fact that our industrial development has outrun our social progress. We should hasten measures leading to larger justice in the distribution of profits and larger representation of all elements in the control of these agencies. We should strengthen our provisions for the restraint of domination by the few, and for the liquidation into the hands of the many of the larger industrial accumulations that our rapid development has made possible.

I wish to repeat that my Americanism has been reenforced by observation of the forces at work in Europe during these last ten months of intimate contact with them, and that I have realized the distance of our departure from political, social, and economic ideals of Europe. There has grown in these United States a higher sense of justice, of neighborly service, of self-sacrifice; and, above all, there is in every section of this community a willingness to abide by the will of the majority. This Americanism is the guarantee of our ability to solve the most momentous internal problem confronting our generation.

But these very ideals, this very sense of justice and service for our own people, give us further opportunities. Our sister civilization in Europe is recovering from a great illness. The many new democracies that we have inspired are striving to attain our ideals. We alone have the economic and moral reserve with which to carry our neighbors back to strength; and to do this is also true Americanism.

Treasure

BY THEODORE GOODRIDGE ROBERTS

Illustrated by C. D. Williams

I HAD telegraphed to John Dyke to have the water turned on, to light the furnace, and to keep it lighted until further instructions. Two days later, at ten o'clock at night, I arrived at Bowtown, after an absence of years.

Leaving my boxes in the station, I shouldered a bag and set out for home on foot. Home—fond and foolish word! I was not in the highest spirits. The station-master had recognized me and welcomed me, 'tis true, but not until he had read my name on the top of one of my boxes.

I trudged up the white hill to John Dyke's cottage, let my bag fall with a thud on the frosty floor of his porch, and hammered with my stick on his humble door. No lights showed at the little windows; and as I did not receive an immediate answer to my summons, the possibility of old John's demise suddenly occurred to me. I pictured the big, unwarmed house with a twinge of anger and disgust.

"It would be just like the old ass to do that," I muttered.

Then the door opened, and John Dyke stood before me with a little, villainous-smelling oil-lamp in his hand.

"So it's you, Mr. Richard!" said the old man. "Well, ye're changed." He raised the lamp and looked at my face with the same expression in his round and lashless eyes that I had disliked in my boyhood. "Ye're aged, that's what it is—aged terrible," he added.

"We all do it," I returned. "As for you, my dear John—but no, I spare you. You received my wire and attended to my instructions, I suppose?"

"You may well suppose so, Mr. Richard. I have taken orders from yer gran'father, yer father, and yerself, and never yet failed in my duty. There's been sane orders and there's been fool orders—but my duty is to obey."

"It is what you have always been paid to do. Now I'll trouble you to fetch me the keys."

I was glad to pocket the bunch of big keys, shoulder my bag again, and get away from that old man. I did not like him; I had never liked him; and yet he had always been a faithful and honest servant, to the best of my knowledge. I had always been conscious of my dislike for him and of his dislike for me. Yes, it was mutual, but we had never told one another of it in so many words.

As a little boy of six, throwing stones at empty flower-pots in the greenhouse, I had looked upon John Dyke, the butler, as my enemy; and now, at forty years of age, my heart told me that he was still my enemy. Nevertheless, I should have been astonished if he had been guilty of a single hostile act at any time during all those years. The whole thing was so childishly reasonless that I laughed as I trudged up the long, white drive winding between black spruces and gray, leafless maples and beeches.

Along that road the crisp and shrunken snow of March showed no mark of hoof or wheel or runner, but only the narrow, well-packed trail of old John Dyke's shuffling feet. I pushed briskly forward in that beaten track for ten minutes, then dropped my bag again and lit a cigarette. I dismissed the old fool at the lodge from my mind, and considered my surroundings.

Ahead of me, but not yet in sight, stood my house, on which I had not set eyes for fifty-six months—the house my Grandfather Rayle had built—empty save for pictures and furniture and memories, and without life save for hungry rats and mice and the fire in the cellar. Ahead, behind, and to right and left lay the reduced groves and glades of the park, to the extent of something less than one hundred acres—and every acre of it overlaid as deep with mort-

gages as it had been drifted over with snow in January.

In my grandfather's day farms had hemmed in the rugged park on three sides, but those farms had gone from the Rayle possession, one by one, in my father's time. I recalled incidents connected with the sale of one farm at about the time of the installing of the elaborate system of hot-water heating in the big house on which my poor mother had set her heart with such plaintive persistence. I had been home at the time from one of my daring but aimless adventures abroad; and now, on my way to the comfort of the water-warmed pipes, I remembered my mother's pride in those miles of radiating tubes and my father's wan and cynical smile. I shouldered my bag again and trudged onward.

The interior atmosphere of the house was stale, but of a habitable degree of temperature. Leaving my bag and greatcoat in the hall, I went exploring behind the pale ray of my electric torch. The lower rooms were as I had last seen them — full-furnished, shrouded, and dusty. Logs and kindlings lay on the hearth in the library, ready for the touch of a match. I touched a match to them and passed on.

In a pantry I found bread of a fair degree of freshness, butter, pots of jam and marmalade, a cold, roasted chicken, and a tin of coffee. John Dyke was a good servant, beyond a shadow of doubt; it was as a man that I didn't like him. I went down into the cellar and there found an increase in spider-webs, the coal glowing steadily in the huge furnace, and all things as I had last seen them on the grooved stone shelves of the wine-room.

But nowhere, high or low, could I find candles, or oil for the dusty lamps. The house was guiltless of electric lighting, for my poor mother had lost interest in modern improvements, and the last farm had been sold shortly before electricity had developed in Bowtown as a practical source of domestic illumination.

I made myself comfortable in a big chair in front of the fire of logs in the library, and there ate bread and cold chicken and jam, drank a pint of grandfather's claret, and smoked my little black brier. The firelight touched surfaces of things here and there, and protruding corners; and whenever a partially disclosed object caught my attention I turned my flash-light on it.

I directed that thin ray at the portrait over the high mantelpiece several times, and each time I felt a return of the amused

"YOU ATTENDED TO MY INSTRUCTIONS, I SUPPOSE?"

curiosity which the sight of that crude and bungling production had always inspired in my breast. My grandfather had sat for it a few years before his death; but to call it a portrait of Colonel Rayle would be to libel the memory of that distinguished old gentleman, and to flatter the ghost of its perpetrator at the expense of the truth.

Leaning back in my chair, I searched the dull and expansive daub with my pitiless finger of light. It was astoundingly bad—

as absurd in posture as it was rank in execution. It was the work of a painter of tavern signs, with—so my father had told me—the frequent assistance and peppery interference of the sitter himself; and yet there it continued to hang, protected

"THERE'S BEEN SANE ORDERS AND THERE'S BEEN FOOL ORDERS—BUT MY DUTY IS TO OBEY"

through the years from battery and destruction by a direct charge to that effect in my grandfather's will.

As a work of art, I'll swear that nothing more hopeless was ever committed to canvas. As a portrait it looked like nothing on earth. As a puzzle it ranked high. Yes, as a puzzle it was worthy of respect.

With my heels on the fender I considered it as a puzzle. It was done in black, brown, white, red, and yellow. Brown was the background; black was the hair—a wig; white were the flat face, the flat paws that stood for hands, and the flat pages of the open book between those paws; red were the lips and coat; and yellow were the daubs that represented buttons and the hay-rakish insults to human credulity that passed for epaulets.

So far, so good. I had worked to this point in the solution of the puzzle in my boyhood. I was master of the intentions of the various smudges and daubs that went to make the picture; and the reason for the red coat was no mystery to me. My father had told me that it had been the painter's idea to portray my grandfather in uniform. The honest fellow had said:

"If we don't do ye in yer colonel's coat, sir, nobody 'll never know who it's the picture of!"

I have said that one patch of white paint was intended to represent an open book in my grandfather's hands. There, beyond a doubt, lay the key to the puzzle and the significance of the whole extraordinary performance. The book was held upright and *wide open toward the room.*

The artist — save the mark! — had not even tried to pretend that the flat-featured old gentleman was making any attempt to peruse the flat pages himself. On the contrary, it had been quite evidently his intention to convey to the dullest mind the fact that the painted gentleman held up the book — flat against his red coat like a breastplate—for the inspection and mystification of the world.

What had been my grandfather's idea? The blotch of white paint, solid as a slab of wood or the stone tablets of Moses, which stood for the face of an open book, was innocent of any suggestion of printed or written words. So it had always been. That white expanse stood unspotted and unbroken save for the figures £ 161 executed very minutely, sharply and blackly near the upper edge, three-quarters left.

My father had given years of his life to the consideration of those figures; I had devoted hours, off and on, to the same unprofitable service; and we had both arrived at the conclusion that the figures meant nothing to us and had meant exactly as much to the colonel. Grandfather Rayle had been a student of men and events on a grand scale up to the time of his retirement from the Indian army; from that date until his death he had been a tireless student of books; and here, on the blank pages of this painted book so unmistakably held up to the attention of the room, lay, undoubt-

edly, his cynical summing-up of all his studious labors—*nothing*.

The fire burned low. I made a trip to the cellar for more wood, and placed two stout sticks of maple and one of birch on the glowing coals. The flame leaped to the creamy bark of the birch and quickly lit the room as with a dozen torches; and by that lurid and wavering glare I saw for the first time a little blob of white on the dark carpet beside the chair in which I had been sitting.

I picked it up. It was a very small linen handkerchief. The touch of it sent a tingling shock through me—through me, who for years had refused to be tingled or sharply moved by anything less sudden and violent than a "whiz-bang." I reseated myself in the deep chair and examined the scrap of soft linen. It exhaled a fragrance as faint and fine and rare as the breath of a May morning on a northern river.

"How did it get here?" I asked the fire. "Old John Dyke is the only person who comes here, as far as I know; and this couldn't possibly be his. He certainly does not smell like this!"

Then I discovered a monogram of two letters in a corner of it. I examined that monogram with the utmost care, by the leaping firelight and by the white ray of my flash-light. The letters were a J and a D—and the keenest scrutiny in the world could not make anything else of them.

J. D.—not John Dyke? To suspect the old, wooden-hearted lout of a proprietary interest in that handkerchief was absurd. But had John a granddaughter, perhaps? I had never heard of one, and could not imagine such a thing. No, it wasn't likely, for I had never heard of his having a wife.

The birch bark was consumed by this time. The flames sank back to the wood and the shadows of the room closed in around the hearth. I tucked the handkerchief into a pocket, deposited my pipe beside the cold chicken on the floor, closed my eyes, and submerged into a tide of dreamless sleep.

II

It was daylight when I awoke. I saw to the furnace, lit a fire of coals in the kitchen range, breakfasted, bathed, and shaved. I went through every room in the house, and found everything dusty, but in order. Then I went out to examine my desolate mansion from the other side.

The first thing that arrested my attention was a narrow track in the snow that led to and from the veranda on the southern front of the house. This was not the track that approached by way of the avenue. It came from the woods, and was narrower than the trail of John Dyke's flat feet. Upon closer examination it proved to be the innumerable imprints of two small and slender feet shod in the latest mode. I knew—who wouldn't have known?—that these were the tracks of the owner of the handkerchief.

"I like her cheek, whoever she is!" I remarked.

I left the veranda and followed the path into the woods. It ran crookedly, avoiding big trees and tangles of young spruces. It made a sharp elbow at an ancient golden birch which extended a horizontal branch within three feet of the snow. Broken twigs on the branch and a roundabout design of footprints beneath suggested that the owner of the feet was in the habit of resting here and using the branch as a rustic seat.

Looking closer, I discovered a small book in a crimson cover stuck in the crotch formed by the butt of the limb and the trunk of the tree. I drew the volume forth without hesitation, curious to obtain from it a suggestion as to the character and literary taste of the trespasser. It proved to be an illustrated pocket edition of "Alice in Wonderland." I smiled, realizing that nobody but an ignoramus would venture to deduce anything concerning the sex, age, habits, temper, character, or social rating of a reader of that book from that fact alone.

But as to the reader's mentality—that was another matter. The average child reads "Alice" as naturally as it eats too much cake. The first is as obviously the right thing for a child to do as the last is the wrong thing. But any one over twenty years of age, man or woman, who finds entertainment and refreshment in the story of *Alice's* adventures, shows himself the possessor of what is, was, may be, or might have been an original mind.

By the handkerchief, the shape and size of the footprints, and the act of leaving a book out all night, I knew the trespasser on my estate to be a female. But what was her age? Did I but know that it was more than twenty years, then would I feel reasonably sure that hers was a mind superior to the obvious.

Mildly entertained by these thoughts, I opened the book and began to read. I

seated myself on the horizontal branch, facing the way I had been going, and continued to read. After ten or fifteen minutes of this employment I suddenly became aware of the fact that I was being closely observed. I glanced up swiftly, with that unpleasant thrill of guilty confusion which a sudden consciousness of the impact of the human eye always gives one, no matter how innocent his employment at the moment.

"I COMMENCED THE DUSTY AND WEARY TASK OF MEASURING A PAGE OF EVERY BOOK IN THE LIBRARY"

There, ten yards away, framed by two young cedar-trees, stood the trespasser. She bowed in reply to my bungled salutation. She even had the grace to blush; but her luminous and inquiring glance did not fall or turn aside.

I slid off the branch to my feet; and no sooner had I touched the snow than inspiration came to me. I had closed the book on a finger at the first sight of her; and now, without dissembling, I opened it at the fly-leaf. Yes, there was her name—Dorothy Jerrold—D. J., not J. D.

I closed the book, replaced it as I had found it, then bowed again, and, with more composure than before, said:

"Good morning, Miss Jerrold."

She laughed delightfully at that.

"Good morning, Major Rayle," she answered.

"I hope you will forgive me for investigating your library without your consent," I said.

She looked confused and lowered her glance. She even turned a shoulder to me,

as if she intended to go all the way about and retire. I took fright at that and approached her, drawing the handkerchief from my pocket as I advanced. I held it out to her, and she took it.

"I thought, at first, that John Dyke had dropped it," I said.

To my astonishment and keen distress the color ebbed from her face and her eyes widened and darkened.

"John Dyke—let me sit in the library—sometimes," she faltered.

"If he hadn't, he should never set foot in it again himself," I cried enthusiastically. "If he had refused you the hospitality of my house! But that would be a crime I could not believe even of John Dyke."

She recovered her color and easy gaiety in a flash. She confessed to having made herself very free of my park, and sometimes of my house, in the past three years. She and her father lived in what was known as the red bungalow, a cottage occupying a small salient thrust into my southern front. My father had sold the wedge of land many years ago to a retired tradesman of the town. The new owner had built the bungalow and laid out small gardens and circumscribed shrubberies in excellent taste, and there he had lived peacefully to a ripe old age. Some time after his death—of which I had not heard before—the Jerrolds, strangers to the country, had leased the place from his heirs. All this she told me as we walked slowly through the woods.

When we reached the rotting rail fence and high, untrimmed cedar hedge of the red bungalow grounds, Miss Jerrold opened a little gate and invited me to enter and meet her father. As we passed through shrubberies and across a lawn to the cottage, I noticed, despite the crust of snow, that everything wore an appearance of neglect. The edges of the path showed a fringe of tall, dead grass and weeds; branches had broken from a large pine and lay where they had fallen; and the fat, stone *Cupid* on the top of the little fountain had lost his bow and one wing.

As for the cottage, it needed paint everywhere and reshingling in places, and two or three bricks had fallen from one of the chimneys. These evidences of neglect and decay made only the slightest impression on me at the time, for to my infatuated eyes and mind they simply emphasized my companion's witchery of grace and beauty and glowing life.

We found her father in his study at the back of the little drawing-room. He was fifty years of age, as I afterward learned, and strikingly frail; and yet he gave me a curious impression of youth. So sharp was this impression that the gray in his hair astonished me. He put down his pen as we entered the room, got lightly out of his chair, and shook hands with me cordially, even before his daughter had completed the formal phrases of introduction.

I liked him from that moment. His eyes were almost as attractive as his daughter's eyes, and in voice and manner he resembled her to an extraordinary degree. But neither then nor later did his age or position seem real to me—his age of twelve years more than mine, his position as the father of that wonderful, grown-up young woman. I have never been able to accept him as a senior.

III

THE ten days following my meeting with Dorothy Jerrold were days of sheer romance. Old John Dyke brought me food, and letters from lawyers, and ancient but vigorous bills; and sometimes gray dawn brought me chills of apprehension of the future. But no fear or shadow of care could withstand the high, magical glory of those days for more than ten minutes.

On the morning of the eleventh day—and it was April then—I took her slender wrists in my two hands and said:

"You know what is in my heart, dear girl, so I will tell you in three words—I love you!"

I gazed into her eyes and saw love alive in their clear and tender depths like magical flowers of life and light.

"Why?" she whispered.

"For a million reasons—one of which is that you are the most lovable thing God ever made."

"But you do not know. You don't know all about me."

"I know you and love you, and I see your dear love in your eyes."

"If I tell you something about myself that you will not like?"

"Tell me! I swear that there is nothing about you, known or unknown to me, that I do not love."

"I am a schemer. I am designing. I planned to marry you—before I ever saw you—for your money."

"And now?"

"Now—ever since that first morning—I

love you. Now it is only you I want—you, rich or poor."

"I am poor. You know that, dear."

"You are rich. You have a fortune—in jewels, I think—the fortune for which I planned to marry you; but when I saw you I forgot it. I forgot everything but you, Dick—even the need of money. But you are rich."

"Dearest, be serious," I said. "Stand still and look me in the eyes. Listen to me. Until now I had no treasure. Until now I was poor—in debt, alone, without hope, and without ambition. Now I am the richest man in the world—ambitious, of high hope, fearless; but of jewels I have only a few necklaces and rings that belonged to my mother, and they are at the bank, where I also keep my overdraft. My spoons and candlesticks are there, too. So if you are joking, dearest, say so and I will laugh like anything; but if you are serious—if you really believe that I have a treasure, a fortune, stowed away in that old hulk of a house—well, little girl, I had better take you home and send for a doctor."

"I am serious, dear. I know. Come with me, and I'll prove to you that I know what I am talking about."

We walked to my front door hand in hand, in silence. I was mystified. My brain buzzed with questions and protests so jumbled together that I had not a single word to say.

I unlocked the big door and pushed it wide open. Dorothy stepped before me across the threshold, turned there, and placed her light, impulsive hands on my shoulders.

"If it is a very great fortune, shall I still be the dearest thing in the world to you?" she asked anxiously.

"That question does not deserve an answer," I said. "I don't want a fortune, great or small. If you want one, I can make one for you. I want to work for you, dear. I have never worked for any one yet—except a little for the king in these last few years. But tell me, do *you* want this fortune?"

"No. I wanted it before I knew you and your love; but now I am not afraid of anything, for myself or for poor old dad. I hate the fortune now. I wish it wasn't true!"

We went into the library, and I placed wood on the fallen fire. She established herself comfortably in the chair in which I had slept that first night, and looked up at the ridiculous portrait of my grandfather.

"Now show me this fortune," I said. "If we don't like the look of it, we will give it away."

"Not yet," she replied. "I want to tell you all about it first. Sit down there and listen. Sit so close, dear, that I shall know what you really feel about some of the things I tell you."

I obeyed her. The chair was wide enough. It would have been wide enough even if it had been narrower.

"We are very poor," said Dorothy. "Dad gave up his professorship six years ago, when mother died. For a year he was quite mad, I think; and ever since then he has been just as you know him. He does not give a thought to the common problems of life; he never asks or wonders where our food and clothing come from; he would not eat if I did not put the food before him. All day he reads and writes of another world, and lives in dreams and memories; and the money is gone. Your house interested me from the first. I heard in the town of your fine library. I know a good deal about books, and something had to be done before our credit gave out, so I made friends with John Dyke. He showed me the house; and when I saw that daub up there I asked him about it. He told me all that he knew about the picture, and a great deal about your family. He said that he became your grandfather's servant in India, sixty-four years ago, when he was twenty years of age. He thinks the colonel was a great man and much richer even than people believed—'a grasper,' John Dyke called him. I pleased him so by listening to all his stories that he sometimes gave me the key, so that I could spend hours at a time here alone. Once I suggested to him that your grandfather was crazy when he had that picture painted. He was furious. He said that only a fool would think so, and that the colonel had been sane to the last gasp, and had known well enough what he was about. He went so far, dear, as to say that your grandfather had brains and sense, your father brains, and you neither."

"John Dyke is an ill-conditioned old fool," I said. "He has never forgiven me for pouring vinegar and cider into his decanters once."

"He told me about that. He said you were born on a Friday, and he always knew you would never come to any good.

"'Eddication was thrown away on him,' he said. 'Him a learned man, and gapin' away at that there picter day after day, without usin' his larnin' to find out the meanin' of it!'

"I asked him if he knew the meaning of it. He answered that if he did, he wouldn't be what he was, or where he was. That set me thinking harder than ever about the picture. I measured those open pages. Each one is eight inches by five and one-half. Then I commenced the dusty and weary task of measuring a page of every book in the library. I worked at this only when I was alone in the house, of course, for I did not want John Dyke to get an inkling of what I was about. I found single volumes, and even sets, whose pages measured eight by five and one-half; but no page 161 of any of these held the solution of your grandfather's riddle. It was not until late in January—last January—that I came upon 'The History of the Early Fathers of the Church,' in fifteen volumes, by the Right Rev. Francis White, D.D., Bishop of Rochester, and the Venerable Henry Blank, D.D., Archdeacon of Cherminster-Newton. Have you ever heard of Bishop White and Archdeacon Blank?"

"Never," I replied. "The theological section of grandfather's library never attracted me."

"Bishop White and Archdeacon Blank," continued Dorothy. "From the title-page of their first volume I received inspiration. White and Blank! And those fifteen books are the only theological works in the library. I asked John Dyke about them, and he said he remembered when the colonel bought them. He saw them catalogued by a second-hand dealer in London, and sent for them, shortly before the painting of that picture. Now, you see, Dick! Look—Bishop White and Archdeacon Blank!"

I looked up at that base but significant composition.

"Of course," I said. "That chunk of paint between the colonel's paws is supposed to represent a volume of the works of White and Blank. Clever girl! I might have thought of that myself if I had started measuring pages and hunting through the library."

"I turned to page 161 of the first volume," continued Dorothy. "Nothing there! So I tried the second volume. I looked at page 161 of all the fifteen books. I read fifteen pages of that very dull 'History of the Early Fathers of the Church.' Nothing. Not a word of earthly treasure. And when I went home, there on the hall table were more bills. Dad always puts them in a neat row on the table. He doesn't give them a thought. He doesn't seem to know what they mean. I went to my room and cried. Oh, Dick, I was miserable! There was money, or its equivalent, hidden somewhere within a few hundred yards from me—and I needed money. I wanted to find it—to make sure of it. I planned then to marry you—if I found the treasure. John Dyke told me you were a bachelor."

"And suppose I had not wanted you to marry me?"

"I did not think of that. I thought only of myself, and of poor dad, and of how terrible it would be if you were—if I couldn't even *like* you. The idea that you might not be willing to marry me did not enter my head."

"No wonder, dear girl! And then what did you do?"

"I thought and thought, and was very miserable. I worked my way through all the other books of the library; but that was a hopeless task, for I knew that if the picture meant anything at all the meaning was hidden somewhere in one of those fifteen dull volumes by the bishop and the archdeacon. So I went back to the 'Fathers of the Church' and began to read straight ahead. I grew to hate your grandfather; and all the time new bills came in, and old bills came again, and dad went on with his dreams and writings of another and fairer world than this. *And then, all of a sudden, it came to me!* I awoke very early one morning, and the very first thought that popped into my head was that *the pages of the history are numbered at the foot, not at the top.* Your grandfather had held the book upside down! So I had been wrong in the number of the page!"

"And it was page 191!" I exclaimed, fired at last with the heat of the chase.

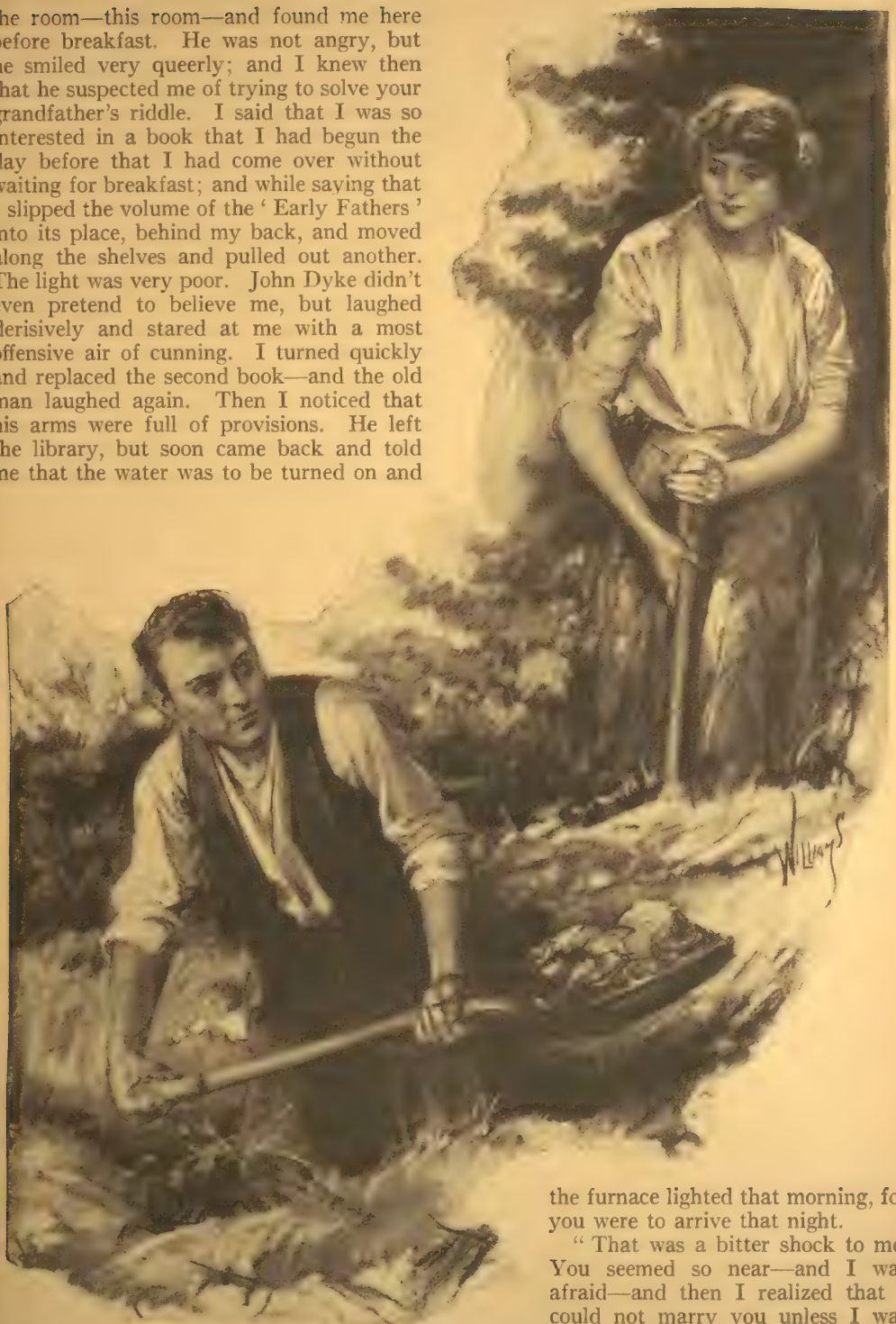
"Yes—and I found it!" cried Dorothy. "I came over immediately, for I had my own key by that time. I found it—page 191 of the seventh volume. On a margin of the page was written:

"Necessity will have sharpened your wits by the time you find this, my dear son, or grandson, as the case may be. Dig on the south side of the Inkerman pine-tree—and good luck to you.

"R. RAYLE.

"At that moment John Dyke came into

the room—this room—and found me here before breakfast. He was not angry, but he smiled very queerly; and I knew then that he suspected me of trying to solve your grandfather's riddle. I said that I was so interested in a book that I had begun the day before that I had come over without waiting for breakfast; and while saying that I slipped the volume of the 'Early Fathers' into its place, behind my back, and moved along the shelves and pulled out another. The light was very poor. John Dyke didn't even pretend to believe me, but laughed derisively and stared at me with a most offensive air of cunning. I turned quickly and replaced the second book—and the old man laughed again. Then I noticed that his arms were full of provisions. He left the library, but soon came back and told me that the water was to be turned on and



WE DELVED DEEP AND WIDE, TURNING AGAIN ALL THE LUMPY AND POWDERY EARTH THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN DUG AND REPLACED

the furnace lighted that morning, for you were to arrive that night.

"That was a bitter shock to me. You seemed so near—and I was afraid—and then I realized that I could not marry you unless I was sure, *sure* that you were rich. Oh, Dick, don't look at me! But then I did not know anything about love. I

thought frantically. How was I to learn the whereabouts of the Inkerman pine-tree in one short day, and without telling everything to that old man? There are at least a dozen big pines within fifty yards of this house. If an Inkerman tree, why not a Sebastopol tree? So I asked the old man if the colonel had named any of his trees after battles.

"He looked sly and excited, and wanted to know where I got that idea. I answered that I had seen a mention somewhere—just where I couldn't remember, of course—of a Sebastopol pine. He literally shook with excitement, and came to the window where I was and looked out.

"'Yes,' he said, 'and four more battles besides.'

"He pointed out one named Taku Forts, and the big one with the broken top called Inkerman. Wasn't that lucky, dear—and clever? He pointed out the Inkerman pine to me with one of his dirty fingers, the silly, sly old man. I wanted to laugh; but I was very low and cunning, too. You have to be low and cunning when you try to rob people; so I pretended not to be interested in the Taku Forts and Inkerman pines, and asked him which was the Sebastopol tree. Of course he said he didn't know, that 'he didn't rightly remember.' A baby would have known that he was lying. He is a very stupid old man. Then a man came to turn on the water, and John had to go down cellar with him.

"I took out the book that John had seen me replace on the shelf, opened it anywhere, and hurriedly wrote on the margin of a page:

"To find the treasure, dig on the north side of the Sebastopol pine.

"Then I went home and cooked breakfast. John Dyke was about the place all day and all evening. So was I, watching him—and watching for a chance to dig on the south side of the Inkerman pine and make sure of your fortune. John went away at about half past nine. You came soon after ten; and before eleven John returned and wandered about for an hour or more. So I went home and to bed. I was disgusted with John Dyke for having upset my plans for that night. We met face to face next morning; and ever since I have been waiting for you to tell me that you love me, so that we could dig up the treasure together."

She left the chair and brought a brown book from one of the shelves, opened it at page 191, and showed me Grandfather Rayle's extraordinary instructions. We armed ourselves with two spades from the tool-house and went boldly forth, in broad daylight, to dig up our fortune.

On our way to the Inkerman pine we passed the one called Taku Forts.

"Look!" exclaimed Dorothy, pointing to the foot of the tree.

I looked, but saw nothing remarkable.

"The spruce boughs!" she cried. "See, they are fresh-cut and laid all around it; and around that pine, too; and that one; and that—the Inkerman pine! It was not so last autumn."

She ran to the nearest pine-tree and lifted a few of the green spruce branches from the ground. There lay broken moss and severed roots and new-turned forest loam. We both ran to the Inkerman pine and thrust aside the screen of spruce boughs with our feet. Here, too, the ground about the tree had been dug.

Without a word, we set to work with our spades. We delved deep and wide, turning again all the lumpy and powdery earth that had already been dug and replaced. Too late! Whatever had been there was not there now.

"John Dyke!" exclaimed Dorothy. "Have you seen him to-day?"

"No—nor yesterday," I replied. "He was at the house the night before last, with butter and groceries; and he was unusually chatty."

We ran all the way along the drive to the lodge. No smoke rose from the chimney. We knocked on the door, we banged on it; then we turned the knob and walked in. The house was empty. John Dyke was gone, along with his Sunday clothes and such small personal items of property as his pipes and razors.

"The police!" I cried, and started for the door.

Dorothy caught me by an arm and held tight.

"Wait," she said. "Do you want it so much?"

"Only for your sake—and to lay that old thief by the heels!"

"Please let the thief go. And let the fortune go, too. I don't want your grandfather's money, Dick. The only money I want is your money. I want you to work for me!"

The Last Straw*

THE WINNING OF A GOOD WOMAN IN THE BAD LANDS

By Harold Titus

Author of "I Conquered," "Bruce of the Circle A," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

THE cow-hands at the H. C. Ranch are surprised when the new owner, Jane Hunter, turns out to be an Eastern girl. She chooses Dad Hepburn as foreman by having all the hands draw straws—all except one, Tom Beck, who refuses to participate in the lottery, although had he done so he would have won. Beck lectures Miss Hunter because she drinks cocktails and smokes cigarettes, telling her that the ranch is in bad shape on account of cattle-stealing, and that she will have to change her Eastern manner of living if she is to make good. Piqued, Jane resolves to make the taciturn fellow like her.

A New York lover, Dick Hilton, appears at the ranch, and rebukes Jane for heeding a cowpuncher's advice, but finds that he has lost his hold upon her. Thereupon he is overcome by his passionate temper, threatens to do her bodily harm, and desists only when Tom Beck opportunely arrives. Leaving the ranch, Hilton misses his way on the prairie, but is hospitably received by Bobby Cole, the daughter of a "nester," who threatens trouble for Jane, as he has filed upon a water-hole much used by her cattle. Finding that the Cole girl hates Jane, Dick makes love to her, and joins in the plot against Jane's welfare.

Jane has assigned Beck to the task of teaching her riding and roping, and is much in his company. In town, Beck forces a man who spoke slightingly of the new owner to eat his words at the point of a gun.

The Rev. Azariah Beal, brother of a humorous cowboy named Two-Bits Beal, arrives with a choice assortment of fountain pens to sell, and informs the boys that he overheard men stating that eight H. C. horses had been run off. Foreman Hepburn buckles on his gun and starts off, alone, after the stolen animals.

XII

IT was the next morning. Beck, standing beside Jane's desk, had told her of the foreman's departure and its motive.

"But doesn't that mean he'll be in danger?" she queried in frank dismay.

"A man who goes after horse-thieves is likely to run into trouble, ma'am. That is, if he gets close to 'em. He wouldn't let anybody go with him, so I guess he figures he's competent," Beck added dryly. "He'll come back all right. I'd bet on it!"

"But I don't want any of you men to put yourselves in danger for me, for the things I own. I won't have it. Haven't we any law to protect us?"

Beck shook his head.

"There's law on the books; but using that law takes time, and in some cases, like this, there ain't time to spare. You've got to make a law of your own, or those that somebody else makes won't be worth much to you. It ain't pleasant to have to go gunning for your horses and cattle; but if that's the only way to hold 'em, it's got to be done. It's either go get 'em, and drive the thieves out, or be driven out yourself. You don't want to be driven out, do you, ma'am?"

"You know the answer to that," she declared resolutely. "Where is this place? How long will it take Hepburn to get there?"

"Can't tell," Beck replied, and again he spoke with a noticeable dryness of manner. "Twenty Mile is only a short ride, but we got the news late. They're probably gone yonder by now, and he might trail 'em a good many days an' then lose 'em."

"And this other—this water-hole? What about that?"

Beck could not give her a direct answer.

"It all depends on what sort of nester

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this is. He might be talked out of it, though that ain't likely."

She tapped the desk with nervous fingers.

"I came down to tell you about Dad last night; that's why I was here," he explained, as if he considered that an explanation of his presence was necessary.

In his manner there was an indication of the curiosity which he could not conceal. Jane flushed, and her gaze fell. The man stood looking down at her golden hair, the soft skin of her cheeks and throat, her parted lips. One of his hands closed slowly, tightly. For a moment he let himself want her.

"Dick Hilton had been an old friend of mine; that is, I thought he was a friend. He said some things last night that I wouldn't want you to misunderstand. They —that is, it would hurt me to think that you might believe what you heard him say."

"WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?"
"A FELLA, HE MADE 'EM AN' GIVE 'EM TO ME, AN' THEY WAS TOO SMALL FOR ME"

"I am very glad that you did come. I don't know how much you heard, or what you saw, but—"

"Nothing that I can recall, except that you wasn't havin' your own way."

The courtesy of this touched her, and she smiled her gratitude.

"I don't think there's any danger of me misunderstanding anything that man would say about you, ma'am—I mean of misunderstanding his meaning, not only his words."

"That is as much assurance as could be given," she replied.

For forty-eight hours following Hepburn's departure the H. C. was in a state of expectation. Frequently, even on the first night, the men would stop talking at any unusual sound, and would listen as if they believed it might be the foreman returning —or some one bringing word that he would never return. The remainder of the crew did not have the faith in his safety that Beck had expressed to Jane Hunter.

The Rev. Mr. Beal held the floor much of the time, preaching frequent impromptu sermons, and discoursing largely on small matters. To him the rest listened in delight —with the exception of Two-Bits, who was overawed by his kinsman's eloquence.

A less obvious activity of the reverend one's was his unending series of pertinent questions. He asked them casually, and covered his attempts to glean information by long-winded comments on irrelevant subjects. Tom Beck, even, caught himself expressing opinions when he had not intended to; and thereafter he guarded himself carefully.

"That man's an old fox," he thought. "He knows a heap more than he lets on—like some other folks!"

Otherwise the itinerant cleric seemed harmless. He let no opportunity pass to sell his fountain pens, a stock of which he always carried in the pockets of his frock coat. He took frequent inventories of his property; and when he either miscounted or actually found some article missing, he turned the place upside down until the loss was adjusted.

He seemed inclined to linger, for, though assuring the rest that his plans were not of mortal making, he often spoke of the summer's work. He was no mean ranch-hand himself, and was with his brother much, doing everything from branding colts to digging post-holes.

On the morning of the third day, Hepburn not having returned, Jane called Beck to the house and asked if he did not think it wise to send help. Tom did not reply at once, because at this suggestion a possibility flashed into his mind which he had not considered hitherto.

"Has he taken this chance to quit the country?" he asked himself. "Has something happened that is bound to come to light?"

Then, looking at Jane, he said aloud:

"Your worry is in the wrong place. You're worrying over your men, and you ought to be worrying over your stock. You've come into this country, and you want to stay; but you don't seem to understand, quite, that this is no polite game you're playing. When a man goes to work for an outfit, if he's the right kind to be a top hand out here, he's willing to do anything that comes up, even if it's risking his life. That ain't right pleasant to think about, ma'am, but we all understand it. If it has to be, it has to be; no choice. If you're going to worry more about your men than you do in havin' them hold up your end of the game, you ain't going to play up to your part. You can't be soft-hearted and stand off horse-thieves."

"But don't you see that I can't feel that way?" she pleaded.

"Then you've got to act that way, ma'am," he told her. "Your men have got to understand that you care whether school keeps or not—or school ain't going to keep. Get that straight in your head."

He looked down at her for a moment and added:

"If Hepburn don't show up soon, it might be wise to go prospectin'; but it won't be best to think more about him than you do about the men he's after—at least it won't be wise to show that you do. I ain't advisin' you to be hard-hearted. Just play the game; that's all."

He left her with a good deal to think about.

After all, there had been no occasion for concern, because at noon, dust-covered and astride a gaunt horse, the foreman brought eight H. C. horses into the ranch. The men hastened from the dinner-table, but Hepburn did not respond to their queries and congratulations. He bore himself with dignity, and had an eye only for the completion of his task.

"Open the gate to the little corral, Two-Bits," he directed.

This done, he urged the horses within. Next he dragged his saddle from the big bay, rubbed the animal's back solicitously, let him roll, and led him to the stable, where he measured out a lavish feed of oats.

Meanwhile he had been surrounded by insistent questioners, but he put them off rather abruptly. When he emerged from the stable, slapping his palms together to rid them of moist horsehair, he stopped.

hitched up his chaps, and looked from face to face until his eyes met those of Tom Beck, who had been the last to approach. Their gazes clung, Hepburn's in challenge now, and in the other's an expression which defied definition.

"I brought 'em in," the foreman said, still staring at Beck, and biting savagely on his tobacco. "Does *that* mean anything?"

Beck smiled as if it did not matter much.

"For the present—you win," he said.

The others had not caught the signifi-

"WE'VE COME TO STAY HERE; WE CAN TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES; WE DON'T ASK NOTHIN' BUT TO BE LET ALONE, AN' WE'RE GOIN' TO BE LET ALONE IF WE HAVE TO MAKE IT STICK WITH GUN-PLAY!"

THE MAN HAD PURPOSELY HELD ALOOF TO WATCH THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THE TWO WOMEN

cance of this exchange, and when Dad moved forward their talk broke out afresh. Hepburn grinned, pleased at the stir.

"Now, now! Don't swamp a waddie when he comes in after next to no sleep an' ridin' from hell to breakfast," he protested. "One at a time, one at a time!"

"Tie to the story an' drag her past us," advised Curtis.

"It ain't much," said Hepburn, with a modesty that was somewhat forced. "It wasn't nothin' but a case of goin' and gettin' the goods. Picked up the trail at the mouth of Twenty Mile early the mornin' after I set out, and dragged right along on it. There was three of 'em, so I laid pretty low the first day. Then one cuts off toward the railroad, and at night the others turned the horses into that old corral at the Utes' buckskin camp. I waited until they got to sleep, saw I couldn't sneak the stock away, so"—he spat and wiped his mustache—"I just naturally scattered their fire all ways."

He laughed heartily.

"You'd ought to seen 'em coming out of their blankets! I dropped two shots in the coals and then blazed away at the first man up. Missed him, but cut 'em off from their ridin'-horses, got ours out of the corral while their saddle stock was stampedin' all over the brush, and lit out for here, hittin' the breeze. That's about all. Stopped at

Webb's last night and tried to figure out the men, but they're strangers, I guess."

There were comments and questions. Then Jimmy Oliver, looking at Dad's saddle, said:

"What happened to your horn, there?"

The foreman chuckled.

"One of 'em almost got me, boys, but a miss is as good as four or five days' ride, ain't it? Was circlin' for the horses, shootin' sideways at 'em, when one of 'em put some lead in betwixt me and the horn, only quite close to the horn, it seems."

"Well, I'll be darned if you didn't have a close shave!"

Just then Jane Hunter rode up on her sorrel, and when she recognized her foreman she smiled in relief.

"You're back, and safely!" she said as she dismounted.

"With the bacon, ma'am."

"An' they almost got his bacon, Miss Hunter," Oliver said. "Look here!" He indicated the damaged saddle and explained.

"They came that close to shooting you?" she asked Dad. Her voice was even enough, but she could not conceal her dismay at his narrow escape.

"Why, Miss Hunter, that ain't nothin'. I was just tellin' the boys that a miss is as good as a long ride. I'm your foreman, they was your horses—"

"Such things have to be," she broke in.

She was making an effort to be decisive and convincing, but her voice was not just steady, and Beck, at least, knew how desperately she tried to play up to her part, to smother her impulse to show that she held life dearer than her property, to shrink from the hard facts of the hard life she faced.

"So long as I'm your foreman, nobody's goin' to get away with your stock without a fight," Hepburn went on pompously, well satisfied with the impression he had made. "If necessary, they'll come a lot closer to lettin' the blessed sunshine into my carcass than this. There ain't a man of us who wouldn't do it for you, an' gladly. If they're goin' to try to fleece you, they've got us to reckon with first. Ain't that the truth, Tom?"

Beck did not reply, but watched Jane Hunter as she stood looking down at the saddle with its telltale scar.

Azariah Beal remained when the group broke up. He leaned low over the saddle and examined the leather binding about the horn. He fingered it, then lowered his face close against it. For a moment he held so, and then straightened slowly. He walked toward the bunk-house so absorbed that he talked to himself, and as he passed Beck he was muttering something about a "wolf in sheep's clothing."

"What's that?" asked Beck.

The clerical philosopher stopped, surprised that he had been overheard. He looked at Tom and blinked and rattled the pens in his coat-pocket, then looked about to see whether they were observed.

"Brother, when a man is honest, does he go to great pains to make that honesty evident? Does he lie to make people believe he does not act a lie?"

"Not usually. What are you drivin' at, reverend?"

The other stepped closer.

"If you'll examine that saddle-horn, you'll discover that the shot which tore it was fired from a gun held so close that the powder burned the leather. More—that it was fired so recently that the smell of powder is still there. There is something rotten, brother, in a locality nearer than Denmark!"

Beck whistled softly to himself.

XIII

THE mountains, which had been brown and saffron when Jane Hunter came to take possession of her ranch, grew tinted with green as grasses sprouted under the coaxing sun. Piñons were edged with lighter tints, contrasting sharply with the deep color of older growth. Service-bushes turned cream-color with bloom, and sage put out new growth. Calves, high-tailed and venturesome, frolicked between frequent meals from swollen udders. Birds nested, and shy mountain flowers completed their brief cycle.

No life remained arrested, and with the rest the girl from the city developed. She took on a more robust color; her eyes, which had always been clear and cool, had a different look, and a thin sprinkling of tiny freckles appeared across her nose. She had taken to the ways of the mountains easily. Her modish clothing was discarded, and she wore brightly colored shirts, a brimmed hat, a drab riding-skirt, and the smallest pair of boots that had ever been manufactured in that country.

Two-Bits was wide-eyed in his enthusiasm.

"My gosh, reverend!" he whispered to his brother. "Look at them boots! Ain't they the grandest little things you ever seen? Gosh, they're too little for any spurs she can buy, ain't they? *Gosh!*" he concluded in helpless admiration.

The brothers had something on. This was evident from the way in which they kept apart from the others. Each evening they would sit on a wagon-seat or perch on a corral, or Azariah would stand near while Two-Bits groomed his little horse, Blackie, and they would talk, low and confidentially, the parson gesticulating and Two-Bits looking far away and talking laboriously, as if he were memorizing something.

The homely fellow took several mysterious trips to town. Once he borrowed ten dollars from Beck and offered a buckskin bridle as security, which the other waved away with affectionate curses.

Hepburn had been commissioned to talk with Cole, the nester, and determine his plans as they might affect the H. C. This took him away from the ranch repeatedly—so many times, in fact, that it gave Beck one more thing to wonder about. Also there was a letter for Hepburn, arriving a day or two after his return with the stolen horses, which sent him suddenly to Ute Crossing; thereafter he went frequently.

There seemed no way around the potential difficulty which the nester presented. As one of her last resorts, Jane sent Beck to the crossing to look up the record of the filing himself, and to confer with the one remaining attorney in the town. Tom announced his going, and Two-Bits, hearing, asked him to bring back a package which would be waiting there.

When Beck returned that night he handed the gawky fellow a small parcel, which Two-Bits immediately stuffed into his shirt and carried to the supper-table.

"Them your jooles?" Oliver asked.

"None of your goldarned business!"

"Ah, come on, old-timer, an' let us in on it," the other pleaded. "I'll bet it's a present for your best girl!"

"If you got to know, it's corn-plasters for the corns on your brains, Jimmy," Two-Bits countered.

He hurried through his meal and from the table, and, with his brother, walked down toward the creek, where they once more went through their usual performance—this time, however, with less prompting from the clergyman. Then, brushing the dust from his shirt and adjusting his scarf, Two-Bits walked nervously toward the ranch-house.

Jane answered his knock with a call to enter. He stepped in with the package in his hand, but as he removed his hat the parcel dropped to the floor, and when he regained an erect position after recovering it his face was fiery red.

"What's your trouble to-night, Two-Bits?" Jane asked, approaching him.

"In—" he began, and stopped to clear his throat. He swallowed with great difficulty. "In—in recognition of your—your God—" He coughed and swallowed once more.

"What?" cried Jane in amazement.

"In recognition of your—your God-given beauty an' estim—estimable qualifications—"

He ran a finger inside his collar and dropped his hat. Perspiration stood on his lip in beads and his dismayed eyes roved the room. He moved his feet nervously.

"In recognition of—" he began again, but broke off short. "Darn it all!" he exploded. "My brother taught me, but I can't do it—here!" He held the package toward her with an unsteady hand, and a great relief came into his eyes. "I found this in the road, an' thought mebby you might want 'em."

Controlling her desire to laugh at his confusion, Jane took the package and turned it over in her hands.

"What is it, Two-Bits? Why do you bring it to me?"

"I can't use it—'em. I thought—" he began, backing rapidly toward the door and moving with accelerated speed as he put distance between them.

"Two-Bits, you wait!" she commanded. "I'm going to find out what this is before you go."

He looked about in a fresh agony of embarrassment, but her order had rendered him unable to move. Jane broke the string, took off the wrapping, and opened a paper box. Within reposed a pair of spurs—spurs as small as her boots were small. They were beautiful products of some mountain forge, one-piece steel, heavily engraved by hand, silver-plated. Small silver chains and hand-tooled straps were attached, and as she held them up the delicate rowels jingled like tiny bells.

"Two-Bits!" she cried. "Aren't they beautiful?"

"Yes, ma'am," he said, and made for the door again.

She caught him by the arm and made him look at her.

"Two-Bits, you lied to me! You didn't find these on the road, now did you?"

"Well, that is—not exactly, ma'am," he replied weakly.

"Where did they come from?"

"A fella, he made 'em an' give 'em to me, an' they was too small for me, so—"

"Don't you tell me another single lie! *Where* did you get them?"

"Well—I had 'em made," he confessed, swallowing again, and speaking in a very faint voice.

"Two-Bits!" Jane seized his rough, cold hand, and a suggestion of tears came into her eyes. "You had these made for me? Why, bless your heart, I've never had a finer gift before. And to think—why, you're a *dear!*"

"Oh, my gosh!" he whimpered, and, despite her detaining hand, fled the disquieting presence.

Of all the men in that country Two-Bits was the only one who openly accepted Jane Hunter, and his devotion was caused by an awed appreciation of her beauty. The others, even her own riders, remained stolidly skeptical of her ability to measure up to the task she had undertaken; and when men talked of the business matters of the district they unconsciously spoke of the prestige of the H. C. as a thing of the past.

Hepburn had brought back some of her property that was being driven off, but he had not ended all attempts to make away with her horses and cattle. There were rumors, vague but persistent, of other depredations. Those who best knew the ways of the cattle country awaited the time when the situation must reach a crisis, when Jane Hunter must be put to the ordeal that would test her mettle.

She was still unconscious of much of this, for her desire to make a place for herself centered on penetrating the callousness of the one man whom she wanted to impress most of all. He remained aloof, watching her either with a tantalizing air of amusement or with a subtle challenge to win his open friendship. There were moments when, as on the night after their drive to Ute Crossing, she wanted to throw herself at his feet, to beg, to plead that he would give her a place in his heart.

But that, reason told her, would be the last thing to win him. She must trust to the force of her personality to drive her way into his life.

Occasionally he would talk, for she was a sympathetic listener; but never did their conversation become intimate. The subjects he discussed were invariably abstract and impersonal. While listening, she studied the man, striving to define the quality which lay behind his reserve, and which held some strange attraction for her; but she could not seize and analyze it. Aside from obvious minor qualities, he was a closed book.

Still she saw him at night patrolling the cottonwoods before he slept!

She could not know what went on in the heart of that man, of the fight he waged with himself, of his struggle to stick to his creed—never to take a chance. He did not know that she was aware of those nightly vigils.

The first had been on that night after he had played with her pride and her high spirits. Returned to the bunk-house, he had suddenly seen her not as a smart, capable stranger, but as a girl, alone, facing a new life, surrounded by strange people and unfriendly influences. He sensed a genuine pity for her, and walked back to look about the place and see that all was well, as he might have watched over a sleeping child.

And then, on the day when the sorrel threw her, he had held her body, and the man in him had been stirred. When next he paced those shadows it was not as a protector of some defenseless life, but as one who tenderly lays siege to the heart of a woman.

He did not admit that even to himself, however. He reasoned that he was protecting her because she was a stranger in a strange land, and that the impulse was only one of kindness. But this was a conscious lie; for, as he stood under the stars with the cool, quiet night all about him, he could hear her voice in the murmur of the creek, could hear her skirts rustling in the soft sigh of the wind in the trees, could feel her presence near him when he was quite alone.

He fought it off—fought stubbornly, coldly, because he did not know love, did not know the ground into which he was being carried.

Women? He had had many experiences, but all of them had been casual, mere surface rifflings, and never had he been stirred

as this woman stirred him. It was entirely new, and Tom Beck feared that which he did not know.

He was accustomed to talk to his horses, as men will who love horses. While he rode the gulches alone, he would reason aloud with his own roan, or with the H. C. black or bay he used.

"Why, old stager, we can't take a chance like that," he said time after time. "We've kept our heels out of trouble by playing a close game, an' not gettin' out on a limb; but up to now everything that come along has been boy's play compared to this. If a *hombre* took a chance with his love, it would be the limit, wouldn't it? He'd have his stack on the table, an' the deal wouldn't be more than started!"

Talking thus with his horses, he spoke earnestly, soberly, of the loves of other men. He recalled the marriages he had known between men and women who were from the same stocks, who knew none but the same life. So many had been failures! And this girl, of whom he dreamed at night and thought by day, scarcely spoke his language as yet!

But he could not argue away the disturbing impulse. He could cover it, hide it from others, hide it from himself at times, but drive it out? Never!

Tom's report to Jane, after his trip to town, offered no encouragement. The filing had been legally accomplished, and its significance was further impressed on the girl when he said:

"It's a mighty popular subject in town, ma'am. Everybody's interested."

"I suppose they all think it will mean trouble for me?"

"Yes, an' they're likely to be right."

She shook her head sharply.

"We don't want trouble, but if it does come we must meet it half-way."

She leaned forward determinedly, and Beck stirred in his chair. It was a gesture of delight, for those had been almost his very words to Hepburn when they cleared their relationships of pretense; but all that he said was:

"That's the easiest way to take trouble on."

Just then Hepburn came in with his report on his visit to the Hole.

"The old fellow seems reasonable, Miss Hunter," he said ponderously. "He don't look like he's a permanent neighbor, even if he has bought some cows from Webb, which I found out to-day. He's poor as a church mouse, to begin with—"

"And buyin' more cattle?" put in Beck.

"They were old stock, an' I guess Webb was glad to get rid of 'em," the foreman said with a wave of his hand; yet he did not return Beck's searching gaze. "Cole told me he didn't have any intention of fencin' up the water, so I guess there ain't anything to fret you, Miss Hunter. I sounded him out on buyin', but didn't get far. He's a shiftless old cuss, from the look of things. He may not even last the summer out."

Tom left, and afterward Hepburn talked at length of the situation, minimizing the menace that the others saw, urging Jane to put the matter out of her mind. But the girl was not satisfied, and the next day, with Tom, she rode off toward the Hole.

They made an early start, riding out of the ranch just as the sun topped the heights to the eastward. Dew hung heavily on the sage, from which a fresh, clean fragrance rose as their horses stirred the bushes. Their shadows were thrown far in advance as they followed a narrow gulch, and the sunlight was caught and concentrated and scattered again as the drops flew from leaf and twig.

The girl breathed deeply of the light, sweet air, and looked at Beck with a little laugh as of relief.

"When I sit at that desk I feel like a prosaic business woman whose interest is in ledgers," she said; "but when I ride in this country I feel like a character in some romantic story."

Tom scratched his chin thoughtfully.

"That's too bad, ma'am," he said.

"Which?"

"Both."

"I can see disadvantages in the first, but why the other?"

"I guess I ain't struck much with stories. Used to read 'em—used to get real interested in some—but that was before I commenced to get interested in folks."

"Yes?" said Jane encouragingly.

"Folks are mighty interestin'. The best fun I get is watching folks, studying them. I've been around considerable among men, but I never seen things happen in life like writers make things happen in books. Everything works out so lovely in books; folks never make mistakes in anything—that is, the heroes don't. Why, even love works out right in books."

He spoke the last in a lowered voice, as if he talked of a sacred thing that had been

mistreated. Unconsciously he had voiced the fear that had grown in his own soul, and when he turned to look at her his eyes reflected a queer mental conflict that was almost fright.

She caught something of his mood, and waited a moment to summon the courage to ask, very gently:

"And doesn't love work out in life?"

He shook his head.

"Seldom, ma'am. In books folks gamble with it like it was—why, ma'am, like their love was a white chip."

Again he spoke as of a sacrilege, and his earnestness, though he did not appear to be thinking of her, confused the girl. The wordless interval which followed was distressing to her, so she said:

"And the other forms of expression? Music? Poetry? Painting?"

"You've got me on music," he confessed with a laugh. "I've heard greasers playin' fandangos on busted old guitars that sounded a lot sweeter to me than any band I ever heard. As for poetry—I don't know." He shook his head. "I read some; tried to understand it, but it seems all messed up with words, as if poets liked to take the long, painful way of telling things. I expect poets want to tell something that's sort of delicate an' beautiful. Now and then I've got a funny feel out of poetry, but it ain't anything to me like, say, seeing a bunch of little quail run along under the brush, heads up, lookin' back at you, whistlin' to each other. That's the most delicate thing I've ever seen or heard. I've seen some paintings in Los Angeles and San Francisco; once in Chicago and once in Denver. I don't know. They don't get my idea of it. I never want to see anything more beautiful than sunrise over the Grand Cañon, sunsets over these hills, a dust-storm on the desert, snow blowin' before a norther off the ridges, and things like that. God, who's such a close friend to the reverend, and who I don't know much about, is as good a painter as any I've ever seen."

He said no more, but rode on, apparently thinking of much more that might be said. Jane watched him carefully, a hungry look coming into her eyes. His words had partly analyzed him for her.

He was real. He was the most real human being she had ever known—real because he lived a real life, because he appreciated realities. He was sufficient to himself, finding such an interest in life about him that his own impressions and reactions were the most important things.

All her life she had been fed on the artificial, living on a soft pad of unrealities which covered and hid from her the bedrock foundation of existence. Within the last weeks she had had her first taste of the real, had been face to face with life and with herself. It had been sweet and inspiring; she felt a great urge for more of this new experience, and her mind sped ahead into the vague future, which even her imagination could not picture, because

the new foundation under her feet was as yet unfamiliar. But in spite of that vagueness she thrilled, and as she peered forward eagerly she saw this man, this clean, frank man, ever at her side.

And yet he had spoken of love as a gamble which did not work itself out in life. A sharp stab of shame shot through her heart, for she had once handled her love as if it had been a white chip. She had been willing to chance it as a thing of little value, and she knew that to him that would be the outraging of a sacred thing.

And again she heard the pronouncement of Hilton—"You cannot stand alone! You will fail!"

A knave, she now knew, but he knew her as she had been. And could he be right? Could she become a woman on whom a real man's love would not be wasted? She did not know; she dared not think further; so she drove back her doubts and said:

"There's one question I want to ask, and

I want your honest answer. What is your opinion of Hepburn?"

Beck looked at her with that twinkle in his eye again.

"In just what way, ma'am?"

HIS VISIT WAS NOT FINANCIALLY PRODUCTIVE, BUT HE OBSERVED LONG ROWS OF POSTS SET BY THREE MEXICANS, AND SAW WIRE BEING STRETCHED UPON THEM

"At times he seems reluctant to talk to me, as if he knew more than he wanted to tell; and again I've had a notion he didn't want me asking about certain ranch matters at all. I confess to you that with all the talk of thieving I've wondered if he didn't know more about it than he gave me to understand; but what he did the other day seems, in all reason, to wipe that suspicion out."

"It seems you've answered your own question," Beck remarked. "When you've said that he went a long ways to prove that he's the man you want by what he's just done, you've said all there was to say."

"But do you mean that?" Jane insisted. "Are you keeping some suspicion of your own from me?"

He deliberated a moment, then smiled.

"It's easy to suspect, but it don't pay very big until you know somethin'. Then you don't need to."

They climbed out of the gulch, their horses breathing loudly as they made the last steep ascent and gained the ridge they were to follow. There was little more talk until they stopped and sat looking down across the great flat-bottomed cavity of Devil's Hole. It was a pear-shaped depression, perhaps four miles from rim to rim at the widest point, and fully a score of miles in length. Its sides were sprinkled with cedars which clung to the sheer cliffs determinedly, but its bottom was blanketed with thrifty sage-brush, purple in the sunlight that was just then slanting across the floor, and beneath the sheen they could see the bright green of new grasses.

A dark line marked with the clarity of a map the course of the creek, and half-way down toward the neck of the Hole was a small cabin erected by the man who had filed on the land for Colonel Hunter, and who had drifted on without establishing title.

"There's your neighbor," Beck said, pointing to the cabin.

XIV

JANE looked for a moment, then lifted her eyes to the country which showed through the narrow outlet of the deep valley. Behind her endless ridges tossed upward to a sharp horizon, but out through that gap the range lay in a vast basin, rising gently to diminutive lavender buttes plastered against the sky many miles away. It seemed soft and vague and unreal—like one of the unreal paintings that Beck had seen hanging within walls.

Tom led the way through trees and among upstanding ledges of rock into the narrow and dangerous trail. As he went down, his big roan picking the way quickly yet cautiously, he half turned in his saddle to explain the significance of the descent.

It was the only egress on that side of the Hole. There was one trail on the far side, so steep and hazardous that a man must lead his horse either up or down. The only other outlet was through the narrow gap where the wash of flood water during storms had made the going easy for men and stock. Out to the northwest, however, lay miles of desert—the great basin of which Jane had had a glimpse—good enough to use for range in three seasons of the year, but in summer becoming parched and useless. In the Hole, cattle could feed on the abundant grama and could drink from the creek; but getting them out and over the divide to the more plentiful water of Coyote Creek was an undertaking.

"That's the danger," he told her. "It's a long, hard climb for stock in good shape, but if anything should happen to prevent your stock from drinkin' down here, and they should get low from lack of water, why, then you'd leave a lot of 'em down there if you tried to bring 'em up."

He pointed over the abrupt drop at his left, where a pebble would fall hundreds of feet before striking again. On the other side, his right chap scrubbed the face of the cliff, so narrow was the ledge to which they clung. Jane drew back as she looked.

Finally they reached the flat and swung along at a free trot through the sage.

"There's water here now," Beck explained as they followed the steep creek bank, "but that don't last. It's mighty low right this mornin'. The creek sinks when it don't rain, an' it's been comin' up in just one spot for years. That's what makes it dangerous for you."

They approached the cabin. A mare and a newly born colt eyed them suspiciously. An ancient wagon, its top tattered, its tires red with rust, stood close beside a frail corral. Fire-wood was scattered about; here was an ax with a broken helve, there a rust-eaten shovel, and the whole place spoke of poverty. And yet, piled against the cabin, was spool upon spool of new barbed wire!

"Fence!" muttered Beck.

"But Mr. Hepburn said—"

"Yeah, I recall what he *said*."

Just then the canvas which served as a door was thrown back, and the girl stepped out. She stood just across the threshold, looking at them, sullen and defiant.

"Good morning," said Jane.

"Howdy," replied the girl indifferently.

An awkward pause. Evidently she would volunteer no more.

"Your dad around?" Beck asked.

"What do you want with him?"—a demand rather than a question.

"I am Miss Hunter. I own the—"

"Oh, I know who you are!" the girl cut in defiantly.

"I came down here to talk to your father. We are neighbors. If we are to be good neighbors, there are things we must discuss."

Jane was unpoised by the attitude of the other, but she dismounted and walked toward the cabin.

"What did you want with him?" the girl asked again.

"I want to ask some things about your plans."

"And what is our business to you?" the girl said defiantly.

"It may be a great deal to me. That is why I am frank in coming here. For years this place has been range for H. C. cattle. Recently water has been short. You have wire, and evidently are going to fence; but I don't come as an enemy. Now that you are here, I want to make the best of it."

"But you don't want us here!"

The simple declaration, voiced with that same defiance, confused Jane; then she met the other on her own ground.

"No, we don't want you here unless you will work with us as we all try to work together. I think you will do that, because it is the wiser "

"So you start out workin' with us by lookin' up our claim, the way we filed it, before you come to talk!"

"Yes, I did that. I wanted to be sure just what your rights were before I came to talk business."

"Well, you know now. You know no lawyers can run us off. Ain't that enough? If you know we've got rights, what do you come here for?" The girl stopped, but before Jane could reply she went on, her eyes flashing sudden heat: "You don't want us here, but we've come to stay, an' from the way you've started in to talk your business I guess that's all you'll find out."

Jane eyed her for an interval, then said: "You and I are the only women for miles about in this country. We are near neighbors as neighbors go in the mountains; do you think this is the best way to start in being friends?"

"But who' said anything about bein' friends?"

"I want to be your friend." The sincerity of this balked the girl, and her eyes became puzzled. "I want to be your friend, and want you for my friend. We can help each other in a good many ways."

"I don't recollect askin' for your help."

"No, but I want to give it to you, and I want to ask yours in return. We are here in a big country. We are all more or less dependent on those about us. None of us can get along so well alone as we can by working together."

"Like turnin' folks out in the rain at night, for instance?"

Jane's cheeks flamed.

"I don't understand," she said.

"Think it over, an' maybe you will!"

The girl's eyes blazed uncovered hate, but as they took Jane in again from hat to boots a curious envy showed in them.

"I've seen how much you big outfits want to help poor folks before," she said bitterly. "I know all about that! Maybe it's a good thing you come here to-day, so you'll get to understand first hand, instead of sendin' your men around to learn things for you. I'll tell you something. We've come a long ways. We've been on the move ever since I can recollect. Folks have offered to help us before, an' they have helped us—to decide to move. We've come to stay here; we can take care of ourselves; we don't ask nothin' but to be let alone, an' we're goin' to be let alone if we have to make it stick with gun-play!"

She had advanced, and, her hands on her hips, her weight on one foot, she spoke the last with her face close to Jane's, her head nodding in slow emphasis.

"I trust it won't come to that," Jane said evenly. She had not flinched, but she studied the girl carefully, impersonally, though the color in her cheeks had died. Her face was in repose, her bearing dignified and assured, yet without suggestion of any superficial superiority. "If it does come to that, it will not be because I am unwilling to do all that is reasonable. I have come down here to talk to you, which should be evidence of my good faith. I have been frank. You meet me as if I had come to cheat you or drive you out. I don't think that is fair."

The other drew back a step and looked at Jane, puzzled again. Her face, in spite of its forbidding expression, was beautiful.

"That sounds all right," she said at length; "but I've heard it before, and I know how much it's worth. You ain't my kind. You don't belong here, and I do. You don't want to be my friend; you wouldn't know how. All we want is to be let alone. Our business ain't yours, an' we won't try to make yours ours. Have you said all you wanted to say?"

"No, not quite all; but if you won't listen to me, if you won't believe me, there is only one more thing I can say. You will know where to find me any time you want to talk to me. I will be ready to work with you, to do my share, and maybe a little more. I hope there will be no trouble, for it would force me to make my share of that."

Jane turned abruptly and walked toward Beck.

The man had purposely held aloof to watch the encounter between the two women. He had been certain that the meeting would be anything but amicable, and it was like other situations into which he had let Jane Hunter walk, just to see how she would handle herself. Usually the result only amused him, but to-day he had watched Jane bear up admirably under difficult circumstances, refusing to be angered or confused, refusing to plead, yet, while retaining her dignity, leaving the door to friendship open.

As Jane mounted, Bobby Cole stepped back into her cabin without a word, and the riders turned back on the way they had come.

"I've been wonderin'," Beck said after a time, "how this old codger rakes up the dust to buy cattle and wire."

Jane did not reply. She wondered at that, too; but there was another wonder in her mind about another and more human mystery, going back to a night of storm in the heavens and storm in human hearts. How did Bobby Cole know that she had turned Dick Hilton out?

As they went silently, each thinking of significant things which had been revealed, the girl threw back the curtain in the doorway and watched them.

"I hate you!" she whispered, looking at Jane Hunter. "I hate you because you turned him out, and because you're *you!*" She stood a long time watching them, and with the darkness in her face there finally mingled another quality—envy again.

After a time Jane said to Beck:

"A queer creature, that girl—and pretty, too."

"Ain't she, though? Poor kid! I've seen 'em before, kids of movers like that, not so good-lookin', not so smart as she is, but like her because they was always suspicious, always ready to scrap. It's because they've never had a chance to be decent, brought up in a wagon that way."

"A shame," Jane whispered.

"I like kids," he said later, as if his mind had been on nothing else. "I like all kids, but I feel sorry for a lot of 'em—for most of 'em. Every kid that's born ought to have a chance, a fair show against the world, because the old world don't seem to like kids any too much. That girl didn't have a chance, never will have it. She was marked from the day she was born.

"Why, ma'am, one winter I worked for a cow-man down in the Salt River valley, in Arizona. He didn't have a big outfit, he didn't have much luck—trouble with his water, his cattle got sick, his horses didn't do well, and he had just one dose of trouble after another. But he had three kids, all in a row they seemed"—indicating progressive heights with his hand. "I think they was the happiest kids I've ever seen. I always think of 'em when I see kids that have had to grow up like that girl. I remember those mornings when we used to start out for a day's ride, looking back and seeing those kids playing in the dirt beside the rose-bushes. Their clothes was dirty the minute they stepped outside, and their hands an' faces was a sight from the 'dobe, but there was roses in their cheeks as bright as the roses on the bushes, and they laughed loud, and their eyes always smiled—like that Arizona sky, which ain't got a match anywhere.

"Well, ma'am, this man and his wife just buckled down an' bucked old Mr. Hard Luck from the word go for them kids. They sure thought the world of 'em. I guess that was what put the roses in their cheeks an' the smiles in their eyes. I'll never forget those kids by the rose-bushes, with somebody to care for 'em an' work their hearts out for 'em. That's the way kids ought to grow up; not like that poor young catamount grew up."

He smiled in reminiscence, and his smile was tender.

"Roses and kids," he repeated after a while. "They ought to go together."

He looked at Jane and saw that her eyes were filmed. She rode closer to him, until her knee touched his chap.

"I think that is a beautiful idea—roses and kids," she said. "I shall always remember it."

She knew, now, the man she loved, the man whose love she would win, the man behind that exasperating front of caution. His clear eyes and keen mind were interested only in realities, and yet he could display a tenderness more delicate than she had ever before encountered in men. He was strong, and as gentle as he was strong; he was generous, while a skeptic; he had poise and personality. He could liken love to a poker-chip, and yet, without using the word, could make her know that he held love sacred!

She raised her hand to that locket again, and held it tightly in her small palm.

XV

THE water in Devil's Hole was fenced. It was the Rev. Azariah Beal who brought word of the fencing. He had made a circuit of the ranches, holding services and selling pens, and on his way back from the lower reaches of Coyote Creek he stopped to call on the Coles. His visit was not financially productive, but he observed long rows of posts set by three Mexicans, and saw wire being stretched on them.

Another thing he saw, which he did not mention to Hepburn. Bobby Cole was riding beside a man—a man who did not wear the dress of her country, but swagger riding-clothes; who did not talk with the self-

consciousness of a mountain man when he rides beside a pretty girl, but who leaned toward her and talked engagingly, so engagingly that the girl lost her hostile attitude and looked up into his face with wide, eager eyes.

The fencing stirred the country as nothing had done since the first and only time that sheep-bands attempted to come in. There was talk of it in town, there was talk of it when men met on trail or road, there was talk of it in ranch-houses down the creek, and there was talk of it elsewhere, in stealthy jubilation.

Riley, of the Bar Z, rode the thirty miles from his ranch to discuss the situation with Jane Hunter.

"I don't guess you quite understand how serious it is, Miss Hunter," he said after they had talked a time. "Do you realize that if we have a dry summer—and it's startin' out that way—this is goin' to cut your cattle off some of your best range? It may break you."

"I understand that, Mr. Riley," she said, leaning across her desk; "but there are other things I do not understand, and I am inclined to believe that they are of first importance. Without understanding them, this condition cannot be remedied."

He gave evidence of his surprise.

"I'm not wanted here," she went on. "I'm not wanted, because the H. C. is a rich prize. It seems to be the accepted opinion that I cannot stay, that I will be unable to stand my ground. Now I want to know why. I want to know who is going to drive me out. Some one is behind this nester, I am convinced, and it is the influence behind the things we can see that is dangerous. Loss of range is serious, surely; but what is the reason for the loss? That is what I want to know!"

Riley eyed her with approval.

"I came up here with the idea that you didn't understand, but I guess you do," he said quietly. "You've got the situation sized up right, but there's one thing I want to tell you. So far only one blow has been struck; it has fallen on you. The next and the next may fall on you, but every time you're hurt it's goin' to hurt the rest of us, too. That makes your fight our fight. If you fail, others are likely to fail. Now I've lived here too long in peace, after fighting for that peace, to stand by and see trouble start again if I can help it. I'm of the old school, Miss Hunter; your uncle and I came in here together. I think a lot of his ranch, and—well, if it comes to a fight, I can fight again beside his heir as I fought by his side. But let me tell you that it won't be pleasant for a woman. Cattle wars ain't gentle affairs. They can't be, if they're going to be short wars. There's three things to be used—just three—guns and rope and nerve."

"I trust I can stand unpleasantness if necessary," was her reply.

Riley was impressed with the girl's courage, but, like the others, he was reluctant to believe that she was made of the stuff that could recognize disaster and fight it out, her strength unweakened by panic.

Another visitor was there that day—Pat Webb. Jimmy Oliver had found one of his colts badly cut on wire, and had brought it in. Webb had come to see the animal, and had lingered to talk intimately with Hepburn.

This gave Beck much to think about. He was saddling his horse at noon when Hepburn approached and asked his plans for the balance of the day.

"It depends on what I find. I'm after horses first, but I might have a look at other things. There's so blamed much happenin' around here that it pays a man to look sharp."

"You'd better cut out that sort of talk, Beck."

"What talk?" Tom inquired mockingly. "Seems to me, if you didn't know any more than I do, you wouldn't be so easily roiled up, Hepburn."

"You mind your business and I'll look after mine," the foreman warned him, breathing heavily. "About one more break from you, and we'll part company!"

His eyes glittered ominously, and his face was malicious.

"I wouldn't be surprised," Beck said. "This outfit's a little too small for you and me. It seems to shrink every day, Dad. Maybe, some time, you'll have to go; but just keep this in your head—I've promised Miss Hunter to stay, and my word is good."

He mounted and rode off. Hepburn, walking slowly toward the stable, twirled his mustache speculatively, one eyelid drooped, as if he saw faintly a plan which promised to solve certain perplexities.

Beck was cautious that afternoon, as he had trained himself to be when riding alone. He kept an eye on the back trail and scanned both gulches when he rode a ridge;

"ON SUCH EVIDENCE YOU WOULD CHARGE A MAN WITH ATTEMPTED MURDER AND TURN HIM OVER TO THE LAW?" SHE CRIED. "BECAUSE THERE WERE EMPTY—

but, cautious as he was, he did not see the two riders who sat on quiet horses beneath a spreading juniper-tree at the head of Twenty Mile.

It was after dark when he returned to the ranch, and the moon was shining. The others were at supper. He threw his gun and chaps into the bunk-house and fed his horse. As he walked down toward the ranch-house, the other men were straggling out, and their dining-room was empty. Carlotta brought him steaming food, and he ate with gusto.

When he had nearly finished Jane entered, and he started to rise, but she made him remain seated.

"What do you suppose that man Webb is doing here?" she asked. "Hepburn explains that he is trying to arrange to send a representative with our round-up."

"Whatever he's doin' here, it ain't for your good," he replied.

"Nor yours."

"Don't you worry about mine, ma'am, and unless he's a lot smarter than I think he is, or unless he's got lots of help, don't

—SHELLS IN HIS REVOLVER? WHY, I WAS WITH HIM WHEN HE CAME DOWN THE ROAD, AND HE DID SHOOT AT A COYOTE—THREE TIMES"

figure he's goin' to do you any great harm. He's just a low-down—"

A man was running toward the house, and he broke off to listen.

Two-Bits came hurriedly into the room, his eyes wide, his face white, showing none of his usual confusion at Jane's presence.

"Tommy, they want you," he said.

"Yeah? What for, Two-Bits?"

"I don't know, Tommy. Hepburn an' Riley an' Webb an' the rest want you. I don't know what it is, Tommy, but it must be serious."

Tom saw the anxiety in Jane's eyes. She did not put her query into words. It was not necessary, for he knew what she meant.

"I ain't got an idea, ma'am," he said in reply, "but I'll go find out. You're all wound up, Two-Bits!"

"My gosh, Tommy, they acted funny! Have you done anything?" the cowboy asked in an undertone as they left the house.

"A lot, Two-Bits. I sure hope they don't go proddin' into my awful past. They might find some terrible things."

He hooked his arm through the other's and laughed at the boy's apprehension.

But Beck knew that something of grave consequence impended the instant he set foot in the bunk-house, for the men, who had been talking in low tones, stopped and eyed him in sober silence. Afterward he had a distinct recollection of Two-Bits slipping along the wall, looking at him over his shoulder with the freckles showing against his white skin in great blotches.

Hepburn, Riley, and Webb sat on one bed. The foreman was leaning back, his hands clasping one knee, but he chewed his tobacco with nervous vigor.

"The reverend about to offer prayer?" Tom asked easily.

There was no responsive smile on any face. Some one coughed loudly and sharply, as if it had been an unnecessary cough. Tom halted.

"I'm here. What's up?" he asked quietly. "This is like a funeral—or a trial."

At that Hepburn cleared his throat.

"Want to ask you somethin', Beck. I want you to tell these other men what you said to me this noon."

Tom hitched up his belt.

"If you want 'em to know, why don't you speak the piece yourself? You recall it, don't you?"

"Better talk, Tom," Riley advised.

"I don't know what this is all about. I don't know what difference what I said to Hepburn can make to the rest of you, but I respect your opinion, Riley, and if he's willing for you to know what I said, I sure am willing to repeat it. Hepburn and I have had a little argument. It's been goin' on for some time. He'd be pleased to have me move on, I take it, but I sort of like this outfit."

"Go on," Hepburn said impatiently.

"I told you, Hepburn, and I'll tell you again, that this ranch is gettin' a little small to hold both of us. It seems to shrink every day, and I don't get good elbow-room any more; but so far as I'm concerned I'm more or less permanent."

Webb nodded. Riley shifted uneasily, looking from Beck to Hepburn, frankly puzzled.

"Yes, that's what you said to me. Now will you tell the boys where you rode this afternoon?"

Beck eyed him a long moment, and the foreman stared back, confident, but not quite composed, his little eyes dark. Once he bit his chew savagely, but his expression did not change.

"I rode out of here straight up Sunny Gulch, climbed out at the head, rode those little dry gulches as far down as Twenty Mile, and came up the far ridge. Then I took a circle to the east and came home by the road."

"You admit bein' at the head of Twenty Mile, then?"

"Admit it? Yes."

"What time?"

"Three o'clock or thereabouts," Beck said, after a pause in which he considered.

"See any other men?"

"Not a man until I got back."

Hepburn looked about. Two-Bits muttered low to himself. Riley slowly dragged a spur across the floor. Beck's eyes were on Hepburn; every other eye in the room was on Beck.

"Then will you tell the boys how come this?"

The foreman drew a gun and holster from behind him. It was Beck's gun. He drew it from the case, broke it, and dropped the cartridges into his palm.

Three of the shells were empty.

The two gave each other stare for stare. Hepburn was breathing rapidly, but his look was that of a man who faces a crisis with all confidence. Beck did not move or speak. His eyes smoldered, and his face settled into stern lines. Then the smoldering burst into a blaze, and before his glare the foreman's hand, holding the cartridges, trembled. Hepburn closed it quickly and looked down, and though he had been the accuser he was now on the defense.

"Somebody fired three shots at me at the head of Twenty Mile at three o'clock this afternoon," the foreman said.

It was an indictment, yet it was voiced more in a manner of defense than in accusation. With it Beck's expression changed; it became alert, as if following some play upon which great stakes hung, but following it intelligently, with an insight into the meaning of the game.

"I can explain those empty shells. I took a shot at a coyote on the way back. I didn't see you, Hepburn, after I left here this afternoon until I got back."

Webb got up.

"I guess that makes the case," he said to no one in particular. "I was with Dad," he went on, speaking to Tom. "He was ten rod ahead of me. The shots come

from above and landed all around him. *We* didn't have to look very hard for somebody who wants to get rid of Dad, but we wanted it from you, Beck!"

Triumph was in his little beady eyes and on his mottled face. There was a shuffling of feet. Tom hooked one thumb in his belt with a slow, uncertain movement. His eyes were fixed on Hepburn's face, prying, searching, striving to force a meeting. But the foreman would not look at Beck; he busied himself stuffing the evidence into his shirt-pocket.

Riley rose, and the low stir which had followed the revelation subsided.

"Isn't there something else you want to say, Beck?" he asked. "Didn't you see any other man? Can't you say something for yourself?"

"I didn't see another man this afternoon," Beck replied, still striving to make Hepburn meet his gaze. "Besides, there don't seem to be much to say. I've told my story. It's simple enough. You've heard the other story, which seems simple enough. Now it's my word against Hepburn's—an' Webb's"—as if the last were an afterthought and of little importance.

Riley faced the circle of listeners.

"This is no boy's play," he said grimly. "The foreman of the biggest outfit in this country has been shot at—shot at by somebody who didn't come from cover and give him even a fair show for a fight. We know that there's been bad blood between these two men; Beck has admitted that. I hate to think that he lost his head over a quarrel, and that he'd fight a man from cover, but it looks bad. We can't have this go on. There's been stealing and rumors of stealing for months. There's trouble comin' over water and fence. We've got along like good neighbors for years, but now trouble seems to be in the air. I don't see that there's much to it but to take Tom to town an' turn him over to the sheriff; unless"—facing Beck—"Tommy, ain't there anything you want to say? You've refused once, but I keep thinkin' you've got something else you could tell us."

"No, Riley, I'd be taking a chance by doing more talkin' to-night. I'll do it when it 'll do me more good," he said; but at his own words, brave though they sounded, his heart sank and a rage boiled up in him.

"Then I'm afraid it's jail for you, son," Riley said. "I can—"

"Jail?"

Jane Hunter had stepped into the bunkhouse. It was the first time she had ever been there, and that was reason enough to rivet attention on her; but now she came at a dramatic moment. Her face was white, her lips parted, her eyes wide with childlike wonder; and as she paused on the threshold one hand against the casing, dread was in every line of her figure.

"Jail?" she repeated in a strained voice. "Why?"

The silence was oppressive, and for a breath no one moved or spoke. Beck had not turned to face her; his eyes never left Hepburn's face, and it was he who broke the suspense with one word addressed to the foreman.

"Well?"—a challenge.

Hepburn moved slowly toward the girl.

"There's been a little trouble, Miss Hunter," the foreman said, with an attempt at a laugh, which resulted dismally.

"Trouble?" Jane repeated with rising inflection. She took a step forward, looking about at the serious faces. She looked back at Hepburn; then at Beck. Her eyes clung to him for a moment, then swept the circle again. "Trouble? About what? Who is in trouble?"

"I didn't want to bother you with it," the foreman said, his assurance coming back, for Beck had ceased looking at him. "It's a nasty mess; I don't like it. None of us like it. Even if he is inclined to be a little hot-headed, we all thought better of Tom—"

"Tom?"

Slowly she turned to face Beck.

"Yes, Tom. We're—we're very sorry, ma'am," Dad stammered. Then he recovered, and proceeded, with an effort to belittle the situation by his manner: "Somebody did a small amount of shootin' at me this afternoon. Webb an' I was at the head of Twenty Mile, and somebody fired three times at me. Tom come in to-night with three empty shells in his gun. He didn't explain well enough to suit us, because all he could say was that he fired at a coyote comin' down the road, but—"

"And you're going to take him to jail?"

Her hand had gone slowly to her throat, her fingers clamping on the gold locket, as if for support. Her eyes had become very dark.

"Well, ma'am, that's about all we can do—turn him over to the sheriff," Hepburn said.

She drew a deep breath. Eyes that had been on Beck swung to her and held for a second interval of tense silence; and then Jane, putting one arm across her eyes, began to laugh. The laugh started low in her throat and rippled upward until it was full and clear, like the ringing of a glass gong.

"On that evidence?" she cried. "On such evidence you would charge a man with attempted murder and turn him over to the law? Because there were empty shells in his revolver? Why, I was with him when he came down the road, and he *did* shoot at a coyote—three times. I heard it; I saw it; I was there!"

She shook with unmirthful laughter.

"Praise ye the Lord!" chanted the reverend. "His ways are wondrous and strange to behold!"

There arose a babel of comments, loud, profane, excited, relieved. Hepburn stood as if struck dumb, his mouth agape, and then, his face growing dark with a rush of blood under the bronzed skin, he said:

"I thought you said you didn't see a soul?"

"I said I didn't see a man, you polecat!" Beck retorted, and his eyes danced.

Webb sat down on a bunk as if suddenly weakened. Riley took Tom's hand and shook it gravely.

"Why didn't you tell us, my boy?" he questioned huskily.

The rest stopped to hear the answer:

"I didn't want to spill my case before this—this *hombre* showed his full hand," he lied.

He turned to look at the other who had lied—but Jane Hunter had fled.

XVI

Hours later, after the Rev. Azariah Beal had offered a verbose prayer, invoking the wrath of the Almighty upon those who plot to strike from cover, and after the bunk-house had finally become quiet, Beck stole out into the night.

The moon rode high, flooding the creek bottom with its cold, blue-white light, and he stood bareheaded, his shirt open at the chest, staring at one bright star which stared back from the edge of the hills. Far off, away down the creek, a coyote yapped and, waiting, cried again. Its faint echo reverberated into silence. A horse in the corral stamped and blew loudly.

He moved on down toward the cottonwoods and, reaching them, stood in their shadows, his arms at his sides, his shoulders slacked as if weakened and irresolute. The ranch-house was dark, its shingles smeared with a sheen of silver by the moon, the veranda in deep black.

Tom did not see Jane coming until she was half-way across the dooryard. Then, rather heavily, he climbed the wire fence and met her.

Without a word of greeting Jane put out her hands, and he took them both, holding them between his, looking down into her face silently. Her eyes were dry, but there had been tears on her cheeks, and her lips, as she looked into his smoldering eyes, trembled.

"What were they trying to do to you?" she whispered.

"They were trying to send me to jail for shooting at a man," he answered. "Why did you lie for me?"

"You were in trouble! I didn't know—I couldn't think. I saw it all so clearly, all in a flash—saw that all you needed was one little word from some one else to make it right, and I didn't care beyond that. It was the only thing that mattered. If they had taken you away, I'd have been alone, wholly alone."

"You believed me when I told 'em I shot at a coyote?"

"Believe? Believe? I didn't think, didn't consider. It made no difference to me what you had done. The only thing I wanted to do was to set you free, to clear you!"

"You'd lie for me, even if you thought I'd shot to kill a man?" he insisted.

"I didn't know what you had—"

"You'd take a chance like that? Why would you, ma'am?"

For a long moment their eyes, half visible to each other in the shadows, clung almost fiercely—his inquisitory, hers changing as wave followed wave of emotion through her body. She had never seen him so dominating, and he had no need to insist again that she should answer. She let her head fall back with a half smile.

"Oh, I did it because it was the only thing I could do. I did it, Tom, because—"

He straightened sharply and cut in:

"I know, ma'am—you did it because you need me here on the ranch."

His chest swelled with a great breath, and he released her hands, stepping back and putting a hand slowly to his head. For an

HE SAW A FRAGMENT OF THE BULLET WHICH WOULD HAVE DRILLED HIM HAD HIS HORSE TAKEN THE NEXT STEP

instant she made no sound. Then she laughed strangely.

"Because I need you here—yes, that was it. That was why I lied for you!" She spoke with nervous rapidity, rather breathlessly, and one hand went again to the locket, clutching it in a cold clasp. "I didn't think it was like you to try to shoot a man. I didn't think there was much chance in lying. All I saw was that they were taking you away and leaving me here alone to face all this, without any one I can trust, without any one to help me. That was why I lied to them. You once promised me that you would stay; and I knew then that I needed you. Every hour since that promise was made I've had a greater realization of my need for you, until it—"

Her breath caught in a sob, and she pressed her knuckles to her lips. Beck stood silently watching her, a cold moisture forming on his brow, his hands clenched as if he were holding himself against the urge of some almost irresistible impulse.

"I felt when I stepped in there and learned what it all was, that the last thing I have to depend on was slipping away; and I reached out and grasped you just as I would grasp a straw in a sea. It—I can't tell you"—her voice trembled—"what it meant, what it still means to me!"

Words, words! They poured from her lips with a rapidity that approached hysteria. She was talking without thought, without reason, letting her voice run on, while her consciousness, divorced entirely from it, fell into chaos.

"Everything seems to be working against me, and now, because you have been my help, my strength, they are trying to take you away. Oh, I need all the help there is, and that is you!" she cried with a stamp of the foot as she drove tears back. "There are influences which I can't see, which I can only feel, all about me, within me"—beating her breast—"and outside."

"It may be interestin' to you to know that I didn't shoot at any coyote."

She gasped lightly, and for a moment did not speak.

"Then you did shoot at Hepburn?" she whispered.

"No, I didn't. I'd never shoot from cover."

"I knew that," she said quickly, knowing that she had hurt him by the doubt implied in her question.

"It appears that I ain't very welcome with your foreman. It was a frame-up—a good way to get rid of me. It was one of those influences at work—the kind you've only felt. You can see some of 'em now, ma'am. It's lucky you thought to lie," he continued with a weak laugh that was unlike him. "I guess you're going to need all your luck. But you'd better go in now. It's late and cold."

He wanted to be rid of her presence, for it pulled him, drew him, and he fought against it, fought against the strongest impulse that has been born to man—fought blindly, his old deeply rooted caution dragging him back.

"I don't want to go in," Jane said. "I don't want to leave you."

"But you must go, ma'am. Have I got to pick you up an' carry you into your house?"

"I want you to take this." She went on where he had interrupted her, fumbling at the catch of the chain which held the locket against her throat. "Take it," she said, holding it swinging toward him, spattered with moonlight. "It's brought me all the luck I've ever had; it will help you, it will protect you. You need luck as much as I do—and you need it for me. It's a foolish little trinket, but it means—oh, more than you can know! I'd like to think of you as wearing it."

"I don't think I need that, ma'am. What's in it?"

"Don't ask that! Don't even open it, please. Just take it as a gift and wear it for me."

He made no move to take the ornament, but stood looking at it skeptically.

"Take it—and then I will go in without being carried."

She reached up to place the chain about his neck with her own hands. Her unsteady fingers, as they fumbled with the catch, slipped, and her cool, bare arms touched his flesh. At the contact she swayed against him.

"Oh, carry me in!" she pleaded gently. "Carry me in—not into my house, but into your life!"

All the caution, all the reason that he had summoned to aid him was swept aside. The touch of her flesh against his sent seething blood to the ends of his limbs. It did not need her plea to break him down; the touch accomplished it, and fiercely, roughly, he caught her to him.

"It's all been a lie, another lie, all this you've said!" he cried. "You didn't lie to-night because you need me; you lied because you love me. You love me as a good woman can love, and I love you—I love you, ma'am, as I never thought I could love. It's bigger than I am, bigger than all the rest of my life!"

He looked down into her face as she lay unresisting in his arms, her breath quick and fast and warm on his cheek. He could feel his limbs vibrate as his pulse leaped, and his whole body trembled as he read the look in her eyes, revealed by the brilliant moonlight.

Up on the hills a little owl hooted, and again the coyote yapped. A vagrant night wind touched the trees above them, and the leaves whispered sleepily, as if roused by a pleasant dream. The murmur of the creek sounded almost as a blessing. None of these they heard. They were lost in a vague, limitless world, alone, swayed by the most powerful, the most beautiful force in life.

"You lied because you love me," he repeated in a whisper.

At that she stirred, and her breath slipped out in a long sob. He lowered his face to hers as scalding tears brimmed from her eyes. He felt them on his cheek, mingled with her breath, and he felt her arms gradually tighten about his neck, her body draw closer to his.

"I didn't want to take a chance with love," he whispered. "I've been holdin' back, fighting it off, denying it to myself for weeks—afraid to risk it, afraid to let it come out—afraid of what is *so*, for it isn't a chance!"

"Isn't it?" she asked, almost in a gasp. "Are you sure, Tom?"

"As sure as I am that the moon is up there, Jane."

He lowered his lips to hers, and for a long kiss they clung.

"But you don't know—you don't know!" she cried, suddenly struggling to be free. "You don't really know me," she went on,

pressing her palms against his chest as he held her. "It's big, it's fine—the biggest, the finest thing that has ever come into my life; but, Tom, what if it should be a chance?"

"But, Jane, it can't—"

With a faint little cry, almost as if she were hurt, she suddenly broke away from him and fled toward the house through the moonlight.

He stood alone, the feel of her lips still on his, his heart leaping, his mind swirling. And, looking down, he saw that in his hand he held the little gold locket.

XVII

So, for Jane and Tom at least, Hepburn came into the open; and for Hepburn these two displayed their hands. Of greater consequence, Beck's reserve, his caution, had at last been swept away. He had taken his big chance!

"You're all there is to me," he told Jane the following morning, with a desperation in his eyes and a seriousness in his voice that made her search his face with alarm. "I fought against my love for you, but it wasn't any use. You *made* me love you. You'll make me keep lovin' you, won't you, Jane?"

"I hope so. You don't know how much I hope so," she assured him, as her arms clasped his neck closely. "It frightens me, having this responsibility. It's the greatest I've ever had, and I'm weak, Tom—a weak woman."

"No, strong!" he declared, and stopped her further protest with kisses.

Dad Hepburn, of course, could not stay on under the circumstances.

"There's an advantage in having a reptile in sight, if you've got to have one in the country," Beck told Jane as they discussed the matter; "but he won't want to stay. He's got an excuse to back out gracefully now, and we haven't any excuse to keep him on."

"And will you be my foreman?" she asked.

"If you'll trust me that far," he replied, with the laugh in his eyes again.

Hepburn departed that day, telling Jane that he would like to stay, but that he did not feel like risking his life for the sake of a job. She made no reply other than writing his check. This nettled him; he did not meet her gaze because, though they both had lied, her guilt was white, while his was smirched with the blackest sort of treachery.

His farewell to Beck was not a sincere one, and his successor read in it an ominous note.

"I wish you luck on your job, Beck," he said as he mounted, ready to ride away; "lots of luck."

"Mostly bad luck, Hepburn?" Tom taunted.

The flush that whipped into the face of the older man was not one of humiliation. He rode his horse away with a growl, and did not look back.

If the little gold locket which Tom wore about his neck was a bringer of luck, it supplied a dire need. He had two determined personal enemies in the country, Webb and Hepburn, and as foreman of the H. C. he had many others whose identities were not fully established. There was Alf Cole, the nester, with the Mexicans he had hired to build the fence and clear his land. There was the usual gathering of riffraff at Webb's. And there was Sam McKee, the coward—though Beck had not condescended to reckon him as a menace.

Another piece of intelligence was brought by the Rev. Azariah Beal.

"They're talkin' about you in town, brother. They're saying that now some of this thieving will stop. They're looking to you to clean up the country."

"Ain't that a lot of responsibility to put on one peaceful citizen?" Beck asked; but though he jested over the news, he did not fail to appreciate its import and significance.

"Be cautious! These men are without scruple, brother."

"And so am I—but I got lots of luck, reverend," was Beck's reply.

He needed his luck.

Riding alone, under a rim rock, with the country falling away to the westward, he was speculating on his luck and on the talisman Jane had given him. He drew the locket from his shirt-front and held it on his big palm, eying the thing, wondering what it contained that Jane had wanted to conceal from him.

"I've got a half-grown notion to open it and find out," he muttered, and stopped his horse short.

And he might have sprung the lid had not a zipping sound and a dull, dead spatter on the rock just ahead caught his attention. He looked up sharply, noted the

stain of metal against the ledge, and saw in the sunlight a fragment of the bullet which had shattered itself there, and which would have drilled him had his horse taken the next step.

Whoever fired had evidently calculated on that next step, because he was at such a distance that no report of a rifle reached Tom's ear.

Beck turned his horse, raced to cover, and lay for an hour scanning the country; but his assailant did not appear.

When he rode away he smiled grimly to himself and said to the roan:

"We won't look in it now. Stoppin' to consider saved us that time; maybe we'll need that luck again!"

Another time, the same week, he threw his blankets on a packhorse and started a two-day ride to the southeast; for, as foreman of the H. C., he gave close heed to the detail of his work. At sundown he made a solitary camp, and while his coffee boiled he stripped himself and bathed luxuriously in a water-hole.

He lay looking upward at the stars that night, thinking more of Jane Hunter than of her property, thrilling at the memory of her hair and eyes and lips, telling himself that conditions were reversed now, and that instead of fighting her off, evading her charms, he was consumed with an eagerness for them.

Drowsiness came, and, turning on his side, he reached a hand for the locket to hold it fast while he slept. It was not about his neck. He remembered that he had left it on a rock where he had undressed for his bath. Slipping out of his blankets and turning them back, so that the night chill might not dampen his bed, he picked his way carefully to the place and groped for the trinket.

His fingers had just touched the gold disk when the quiet of the night was punctured by a shot—then by four more in quick succession.

He squatted low, holding his breath. He heard booted feet running over rocks, heard a man speak gruffly to a horse, and, in a moment, heard galloping hoofs carrying a rider away.

He waited half an hour, then stole back to his bed. The tarp and blankets were drilled by five bullet-holes.

"Maybe I'm superstitious," he muttered, fastening the gold chain about his neck; "but it sure looks as if this thing, or whatever is in it, has saved my hide twice in one week!"

The man who had fired into his blankets had trailed him deliberately, had waited until satisfied that he was asleep, and had stolen up to murder him without offering a fighting chance.

"I hear that Hepburn has gone into partnership with Webb," Jane told Tom Beck on his return to the ranch. "The reverend brought in word of it. What do you make of that?"

"It makes about the finest couple of snakes that could be brought together," Tom muttered.

"And somebody tampered with the ditch in the upper field. Curtis and the men started the water down late in the afternoon. They left their tools there, and the ditch-bank was broken. They tell me it surely was shoveled out. The water is low, and losing it hurt."

"That looks like war," he told her.

War it was. That night the men in the bunk-house were awakened by a bright glare, and Beck, looking out, saw that four stacks of hay, totaling more than a hundred tons of feed left from the winter, were in a blaze.

While the others hastily dressed and ran toward the stack-yard in the futile hope that some portion might be saved, the foreman stayed behind—listening. From far up the road he heard the faint, quick rattle of a running horse.

In the morning a note was found stuck in the latch of the big gate. It was addressed to Jane Hunter, and inside, in a rude scrawl, there was written:

> The longer you stay in this country the more you will lose.

She showed it to Beck. After he had read and reread the threatening words, and had turned the single sheet of paper over in his hands, he looked up to see her eyes tear-filled.

"It isn't worth it!" she cried with a stamp of her foot. "This is only the start. Do you know what they are saying in town? Word has been passed that first you are to be driven out, and that then I will have to go. I could risk losing the things I own, my property, but I wouldn't risk you, Tom, dear—I wouldn't do that!"

"And there's somethin' else you wouldn't do," he said, stroking her forehead. "You

wouldn't let 'em drive you out. You didn't start that way. You come out here to beat the game, and if you quit cold you wouldn't think much of yourself, would you? We didn't want trouble, but we've got to go and meet it."

"But you!" she moaned, putting her arms about his big shoulders. "What of you?"

"Don't worry about me, when the only danger is from men who won't come into the open to fight. Besides, you've given me lots of luck. I don't know what's inside this thing"—holding out the locket—"but I've got a lot of faith in it—and in you, Jane."

Before he recognized his love, he had taken pains to bring Jane into contact with difficulties, but now he was impelled to shield her from all dangers and annoyances. In the natural rôle of her protector he did everything possible to allay her apprehension. He could not blind her to the broad situation, but he could and did withhold the seriousness of certain circumstances, even keeping some things that happened, such as the attempts on his life, to himself.

But he could not help being disquieted by the enemy who worked from cover, who shot at sleeping men, who broke ditches and burned property and sent anonymous threats to women. That made his fight a battle in the darkness, and his strength was the strength of light, of frankness, of honesty. His mind was not adapted to scheming and skulking. To drive his foe into the open was his first objective, and that night he set out to do so.

"You call it recognizing a state of war, I believe," he told Jane with a twinkle in his eye when she asked him what he meant to do.

"Tom! You're not going to—"

"Not going to take a chance," he said soberly. "It's just a diplomatic mission, you might say."

He put her off and rode out of the ranch gate. It was dark, and when he had gone about a mile he halted his horse, dropped off, loosened the cinch, so that the leather would not creak when the animal breathed, and stood listening. Aside from the natural noises of the night, the world was without sound.

He drew his gun from its holster and twirled the cylinder. Usually he carried the trigger over an empty chamber; to-night it was filled, and inside his shirt was another gun.

(*To be continued in the January number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

THE PHILOSOPHER IN LOVE

STAR-DUST unto star-dust sped
Ere the whirling spheres were born.
So two beings, instinct-led,
Without throb or thrill to warn,
Fare them forth all carelessly,
Meet till meeting grows to bliss,
Find life's deepest mystery
In the riddle of a kiss.

With the touch of ardent lips,
With the clasp of clinging hands,
Something out of heaven slips
Which no mortal understands.
Love is miracle to wake
Sage and seer to wonder deep;
Sage nor seer am I to break
Where the germs of knowledge sleep.

Dear, we tread the flowery way
Though the riddle be unsolved;
Fate and impulse, nature's sway,
In our passion are involved.
Yet what matter? Let it go—
All the useless fret thereof;
This enough for me to know—
Love is life, and you are love.

Nelle Richmond Eberhart

The New Leader of the Canadian Liberals

MACKENZIE KING, WHOM THE LIBERAL CONVENTION AT OTTAWA SELECTED AS THE SUCCESSOR OF HIS OLD POLITICAL CHIEF, THE LATE SIR WILFRID LAURIER

By Frank Maitland

THE newly chosen leader of the Liberal party in Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie King, has a long name with a sonorous roll to it. Perhaps it is partly for this reason that he is accustomed to use all that there is of it.

And then, of course, there is another likely reason. William Lyon Mackenzie, his grandfather, was a mighty man in his day. Every Canadian schoolboy has read how he led the fight for responsible, representative, and constitutional government in Canada. To be the grandson of a man so famous is no mean distinction; to bear his name no small advantage. To neglect to give publicity to the relationship and the name were to hide one's light under a bushel, to hoard one's "siller" where it earns no interest. William Lyon Mackenzie King is of Scottish descent, and too thrifty to think of any such foolishness.

Space being valuable, let me refer to him hereafter merely as Mackenzie King. For years he has been at once the delight and the pet aversion of newspapermen in Canada and the United States. A newspaperman himself of some slight experience, he has always been possessed of a keen perception of the value of publicity. Likewise he has usually known how to obtain it, even from hardened newspapermen whom professional press-agents considered hopeless subjects.

In company with John D. Rockefeller, Jr., he has been photographed in miners' clothing before descending into the depths of a coal-mine in the interest of sociological investigations on behalf of the Rockefeller Foundation. These photographs have had a wide circulation. In the years that he spent in Ottawa as editor of the *Labor Gazette*, as deputy minister of labor, and finally as minister, the representatives of the Canadian Press Association and the night editors of Ottawa daily papers learned to expect from him, at least two or three times a week, a news story of good, bad, or indifferent quality, telling what Mackenzie King was doing, or trying to do, for Canadian labor.

In those days he was the boy orator, the youthful prodigy of Ottawa official circles. He was the special protégé of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and even ten years ago it was whispered that the old chieftain had it in mind that Mackenzie King was the youthful Elisha upon whose shoulders should fall, in the fulness of time, the mantle of the prophet of Canadian Liberalism. Those were the days when the slightest preference of the eloquent and masterful French Canadian premier of Canada was an absolute law to his party; therefore, that alone was sufficient reason for Canadians to be interested in the character, attainments, aspirations, and achievements of the young man who, by what was after all an unexpected turn of the wheel of fortune, has this year fulfilled the promise and expectation of his youth.

EIGHT YEARS' ABSENCE FROM POLITICS

It is an axiom among advertising and publicity men that publicity, to be effective, must be constant and persistent. The public has a short memory. Eight years ago there was scarcely a Canadian who could not relate, on an instant's notice, at least two or three interesting and significant things about Mackenzie King; yet, when

WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE KING, WHO HAS SUCCEEDED THE LATE SIR WILFRID LAURIER AS LEADER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY IN CANADA

From a photograph by Pittaway, Ottawa

he was unexpectedly chosen as leader of the Liberal party, it is probable that a majority of the Canadian voters asked the next morning:

"Who is Mackenzie King?"

The American Democrats who, in that famous convention at Chicago in 1896, selected as their Presidential candidate an unknown young man whose fiery eloquence had carried them away, created little more astonishment in the United States than was created in Canada when the Liberals, assembled in national convention at Ottawa last August, selected as their leader the young man who, only a few years ago, had been regarded by most people as the almost certain successor to Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The advertising men are undoubtedly right. Publicity, to be effective, must be constant and persistent.

For eight years Mackenzie King had been out of the Canadian newspapers and, except for one unfortunate venture in politics to which reference will be made later on, had played no part in public affairs. When Sir Wilfrid Laurier and his party went down to defeat in 1911 as the penalty for their advocacy of commercial reciprocity with the United States, Mackenzie King, minister of labor, was among the casualties on election night. He was defeated in his own constituency, and he retired from politics.

To give him his due, his record as minister of labor had been successful and even brilliant. He was known as a keen student of labor problems. It was, therefore, not so very astonishing that his services were in request by the Rockefeller Foundation for the investigation of industrial and sociological problems in the solution of which that heavily endowed institution was deeply interested. The offer was accepted, and Mr. King went to the United States.

MEMORIES OF REBELLION IN CANADA

As has already been said, Mackenzie King is a grandson of the man who was the storm center of Canada in 1837, the year when the young Victoria became Queen of the British Empire. William Lyon Mackenzie was an impulsive and hot-headed Scot who in that year was the leader of an armed rebellion in what was known then as Upper Canada, now the province of Ontario. He had despaired of obtaining by regular and constitutional methods the real control of government by the popularly elected representatives of the people in Parliament. The rebellion failed, but it directed attention to real grievances and led to the establishment of the system of parliamentary control of the executive government which is the distinguishing feature of the Canadian system to-day.

In Lower Canada—now the province of Quebec—the French-Canadians also rose in an unsuccessful revolt in that same year, under the leadership of Louis Joseph Papineau. It may be interesting to note in this connection that Henri Bourassa, the leader of the anti-British, anti-imperial, pacifist, National party in Quebec to-day, is a grandson of Papineau. Mackenzie and Papineau were famous leaders in the Canada of 1837; their grandsons are much in the public eye to-day.

MACKENZIE KING'S EARLY LIFE

Mackenzie King was born in the little Ontario city of Berlin, now known as Kitchener, in December, 1874. He is thus not quite forty-five years of age. At twenty-one he was a graduate in arts of the University of Toronto, winning in his sophomore year the Edward Blake scholarship in arts and law. A member of the famous class of '95, he was a classmate of Sir Hamar Greenwood, a Canadian who has won signal honor in the public life of Great Britain.

Two years were spent in postgraduate work at Toronto, following which young King went to the University of Chicago as a fellow in political economy. Going to Harvard later, he was rewarded with a traveling fellowship, which enabled him to visit Europe in order to pursue some special investigations.

Even as an undergraduate, he had displayed more than an academic interest in labor questions. Some one told Sir Wilfrid about him, with the result that in Italy, during the period of his traveling fellowship, he received a cable inviting him to return to Canada to become the first editor of the *Labor Gazette*, an official publication just about to be launched on the journalistic seas. He was also offered the position of deputy minister of labor. At twenty-six the young student thus found an opportunity such as seldom offers itself to the young college man fresh from the halls of learning.

Naturally, he made many mistakes, for

which he was severely criticised by the party in opposition, by employers, and by labor leaders. Nevertheless, he made good. He was the real author of much labor legislation that has proved its worth. He was eminently successful in the settlement of several serious industrial disputes; he served the Laurier administration with signal success on a number of special commissions of the highest importance. In a few years he won for himself the respect and the reluctant admiration even of his political opponents. In a word, he had " arrived."

His reward came in 1908, when he was appointed minister of labor, with a seat in the Laurier cabinet. Canadian cabinet ministers are invariably members of one of the Houses of Parliament. Mr. King contested and won the constituency in which he had been born and had spent his boyhood days.

HIS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH LAURIER

Young as he was, he enjoyed the confidence of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to a degree that was very unusual. The aged statesman had a habit of keeping his own counsel. He was the autocrat of his cabinet, and his decisions were usually made with little or no consultation of his ministers; but of all his lieutenants the young minister of labor was believed to be the man who enjoyed his confidence to the greatest degree. There can be little doubt that Sir Wilfrid Laurier was training Mackenzie King to be his successor in the day when old age or death would make a change of leadership advisable or necessary.

Suddenly and quite unexpectedly, however, the Laurier government fell from power and was succeeded by the régime of Sir Robert Borden. The Liberal party had fallen upon evil days, Mackenzie King had failed to carry his own constituency, and at the time it would have been a difficult task to find him another seat in his own province. The Rockefeller Foundation offered him congenial and useful employment at a flattering salary; and, for a time, Mackenzie King probably thought little of Canadian politics.

To his years of service for the Rockefeller Foundation it is unnecessary to make extended reference in this article. It will be sufficient to say that during those years he became a devoted convert to the idea of labor receiving, through representation on the boards of big employing corporations, a direct share in the control of industry. His ideas are elaborated in " Industry and Humanity," a book which was published a year or two ago, but which has had its greatest sale in Canada since its author became a prospective premier.

SIR WILFRID LAURIER'S LAST BATTLE

After an absence of six years from Canadian public life, Mackenzie King returned in the autumn of 1917 to assist Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the last of his political battles.

In the years that had intervened, war had wrought in Canada a surprising political revolution. A great issue had arisen in the white heat and strain of the terrible conflict, in which the young Canadian nation was playing a part that for all time to come would make the name of Canada shine brightly on the pages of history. The issue that had arisen concerned Canada's part in the struggle.

For three years the time-honored system of voluntary enlistment, which had been taken for granted by practically all Canadians at the beginning of the war as the only system advisable or possible had proved sufficient to create and maintain the Canadian army. From a population of less than eight millions, it had—albeit with many injustices and inequalities, with much waste of effort—secured about four hundred and twenty thousand volunteers who were physically fit, in the opinion of the army doctors. It had brought to the recruiting-stations at least another hundred thousand men who, for apparently trifling reasons, had been judged unfit. From Canadian ports there had also gone more than thirty thousand reservists to France, Belgium, Italy, and Serbia, to fight the Allied battle for freedom.

Canada's record was one of which she was justly proud. Truly, the voluntary system had not done badly; but it was no longer able to produce the men whose service was urgently and immediately required if Canada's dauntless sons on the firing-line were to receive the aid that they had the right to expect from their native land. From French Canada, although it contains almost a third of the total population of the Dominion, fewer than fifteen thousand men had volunteered.

The opposing forces on the western front were locked in the death-grip of a terrible struggle to which no end could be seen. Vimy Ridge had become a name of im-

perishable renown in the annals of Canada, but the valor of her sons had cost her dear, and heavy reenforcements were urgently required if her sadly decimated little army was to be maintained at strength. A little later, Sir Arthur Currie, the Canadian commander in France, was to cable the eloquent appeal which stirred the blood of every Canadian:

> From the agony of the battle-field goes forth our prayer that the homeland may not desert us in the hour of our need and of our approaching triumph.

It was a time of crisis, a time that imperatively demanded immediate and decisive action. In the opinion of the prime minister, Sir Robert Borden, the voluntary system of recruiting could no longer be relied upon. The stream of recruits had dried up. Rightly or wrongly, it was also his opinion that the time had come to effect a union of the opposing political parties, in order that the full effort of a united Canada might be thrown into the struggle. All other issues were trifling and of little importance. The one thing that counted was the mobilization of all Canada's resources of men, material, and money, in order that her mightiest effort might be exerted for the winning of the war.

THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT

Sir Robert introduced in Parliament his Military Service Act, which provided for conscription by selective draft. His next move was to invite the cooperation of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal party. He asked Sir Wilfrid to join a new union government pledged to support conscription and to conduct a vigorous war policy. He himself was willing to stand aside, to serve under another leader, or to withdraw from the administration altogether if by so doing he could promote political harmony.

The idea of a union government made a compelling appeal to a people who thoroughly believed that party rivalries, and the pettiness of party politics, were responsible for many blunders, weaknesses, and ineptitudes in the conduct of the war. The Military Service Act was welcomed everywhere except in the province of Quebec, which flamed into anger toward a policy which it had reason to believe was designed to force recruits from a people that had refused to supply them voluntarily. All Canada waited anxiously for Sir Wilfrid's reply to the premier's invitation, Quebec afraid that he would accept, the other provinces afraid that he might refuse.

Sir Wilfrid kept Canada in suspense for two or three weeks, but he finally refused the premier's offer. The Military Service Bill was bitterly debated in Parliament. All the government's French-Canadian supporters, with two or three exceptions, voted against the bill. On the other hand, the measure was supported by practically all the English-speaking Liberals in the House. A new alinement had been created, and, unfortunately, the division was along racial lines.

About the time the conscription measure became law, Sir Robert Borden succeeded in forming his coalition government. Included in the new cabinet were several of the most prominent of the English-speaking Liberal leaders, half of the administration consisting of men who, in other times, had been Sir Robert's consistent and unrelenting opponents. In the election that followed, Sir Wilfrid Laurier's followers were overwhelmingly defeated in every part of Canada except Quebec. The soldiers voted in support of the government almost to a man.

It was at a time when Sir Wilfrid was fighting a losing battle against terrific odds, when, in eight provinces out of the nine, he had no lieutenants of prominence or influence, that Mackenzie King returned to Canada to take part in the contest in behalf of his old chief. He was loyal to the leader whose friendly patronage had made him. He threw himself into the fight with all his energy and enthusiasm, speaking at many meetings in Ontario. He was again a candidate for election; but again he was defeated, and again he returned to the United States.

THE LIBERAL CONVENTION AT OTTAWA

When he returned to Canada this year, it was to attend the national Liberal convention held at Ottawa, early in August, for the purpose of selecting a new leader to succeed Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It was hoped that, by its choice of a leader and by the character of the platform it would frame, this convention would succeed in healing the historic breach that was made in the party in 1917. Mackenzie King was eligible to attend the convention as a defeated Liberal candidate in the last election. There were few who thought of him as the

likely choice; but it was Mackenzie King who was finally selected.

Political conventions of the national sort are rare occurrences in Canada. Indeed, there have been only two such gatherings in Canadian history, and this is the first time that a party leader has been chosen by a convention. Ordinarily the decision rests with the members of Parliament. Had the choice been made by a convention in 1887, it is probable that Sir Wilfrid Laurier would never have been Liberal leader. He was unknown at that time to the country at large; only his associates in the House knew his ability and his rare personal charm.

But to have left the choice of a new leader to the Liberal members of Parliament in 1919 would have meant leaving it to Quebec alone; for the other provinces had elected scarcely any Liberals. This would have definitely identified the party with a single province and doomed it to political disaster.

Strange as it may seem, the Liberal convention met with well-founded hopes that if it should display ordinary wisdom in framing its platform and choosing its leader, the new standard-bearer might not unreasonably expect to become premier of Canada following the next election. Party conventions are usually confident. Enthusiasm begets enthusiasm; confidence is contagious; but in the opinion of cool observers with little partizan prejudice, the Liberal party had a promising chance of success.

What had happened in the interval since 1917, when the Laurier Liberals were so overwhelmingly defeated? Several things. The war had ended, thereby removing the issue that had created division. Sir Wilfrid Laurier had died, opening the way for the selection of a new leader under whom all factions could unite. Union government had failed to meet the expectations of many thousands of fond enthusiasts who had expected it to bring about a political Utopia. General discontent and unrest, the pressure of the high cost of living—all had contributed to the growing desire for a change.

The war had still to be paid for. That meant heavy taxation, and consequent unpopularity for the government in power. There was a general belief that a government composed of so many conflicting elements was necessarily divided against itself and incapable of taking the decisive action on controversial questions which the times demanded. The premier had been absent for six months, attending preliminary conferences in London and the Peace Conference at Versailles. With his strong hand removed, there had been a policy of drift. The opposition had a real opportunity.

Nevertheless, there were grave difficulties to overcome. The Liberal Unionist members of Parliament held aloof, waiting to see what would happen. They had no part in calling the convention. The great majority of the delegates belonged to the "old guard" that had stayed with Sir Wilfrid Laurier in his adversity. This was inevitable, as, of course, the party machinery was controlled by the official Liberal party. There were men—and a few women—in attendance at the convention who had given nominal support to the union movement two years before, but few who had been distinguished for whole-hearted enthusiasm in aid of the coalition. It was difficult for the convention to choose a leader under whom all could unite.

MR. FIELDING'S CLAIM TO LEADERSHIP

The general expectation was that the Hon. W. S. Fielding would be selected. Mr. Fielding was finance minister in the Laurier government during all the years of Sir Wilfrid's premiership. He was the author of the reciprocity pact with the United States. This was the policy which had brought defeat in 1911, but it had made Mr. Fielding popular in the western provinces, and the support of the west was essential to success. He had been elected to Parliament in 1917 as a Liberal, but as a Liberal who supported conscription. In the House he had supported conscription, but on all other questions he had taken an independent stand.

While Quebec under Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the stronghold of the Liberal party, it was well understood in advance that the new leader must come from another province. Quebec agreed to this; but in the end Quebec and the regular, stand-pat element from the other provinces dictated the choice.

Fielding was rejected because he had faltered in his allegiance to the great French-Canadian who for so many years had dominated Canada and his native province. Mackenzie King was chosen because, in the hour of Sir Wilfrid's greatest need, he had stood firm in his support when others had opposed him; and because the

convention felt that it was honoring the young man whom the old chieftain himself had desired as his successor.

THE FUTURE OF THE NEW LEADER

What are Mackenzie King's chances of success? He has youth on his side, a persuasive eloquence, and a winning personality. On the other hand, his selection is generally considered by the Liberal Unionists as a deliberate affront to them. D. D. McKenzie, temporary leader in Parliament after Sir Wilfrid's death, had talked of the "light in the window" inviting the wanderers home. The selection of Mackenzie King has been interpreted by many as a deliberate snuffing out of the candle. A clever cartoon that appeared shortly after the convention was entitled "The Light that Failed." It accurately represented the view-point of a large element whose support Mackenzie King must win before he can hope for success.

This is not to say that it is impossible for him to gain the needed support. Possibly he can. Nevertheless, while conscription became a dead issue on the day of the signing of the armistice, there is no gainsaying the fact that the political war record of Mackenzie King is vulnerable at many points. His opponents are certain to direct their thrusts toward the weak spots in his armor.

Who are his opponents? Apparently, but not certainly, the historic Conservative party passed away for all time when the coalition government was formed. The strongest of the Liberal Unionists who joined Sir Robert Borden's new government seem likely to continue their support. The new party calls itself Unionist, but its principal element of strength is the Conservative party, which it has succeeded. On most questions its policy will be a modification of the old Conservative policy.

This union is made easy by the fact that for years there was no essential difference dividing the two Canadian parties. For long the nominal difference—and at one time the real difference — was the tariff issue. The Conservatives stood for protection, the Liberals for free trade or a low revenue tariff. That was before Sir Wilfrid became premier. In power, he maintained protection as the underlying principle of his tariff legislation, and the question almost disappeared as a party issue.

In the western provinces, however, the organized farmers control the situation today, and they have formed a new political party pledged to secure what is practically free trade. They supported the union government in 1917, but they will not support it now. They are sufficiently strong to elect almost the entire representation of the three prairie provinces. Without their support, the Liberals cannot possibly attain to power.

To secure their support, the convention made many specific promises of tariff reductions. It could not adopt the farmers' platform in its entirety without endangering its eastern support, for there are many high-tariff men among eastern Liberals. It is possible, indeed, that in its effort to conciliate the two opposing elements it has pleased neither. The tariff question is again the big issue in Canadian politics; and the new Liberal leader's attitude toward it is unknown.

It is a complicated situation. To add to the existing uncertainties, woman suffrage becomes effective with the next election, with results that no man can foretell. The most effective aid that will be given the new leader will be afforded by the high cost of living. Handicapped as he is in many respects, discontent and unrest occasioned by the pressure of high prices may make William Lyon Mackenzie King premier of Canada before very long—possibly within a few months. That he has the ability to adorn a position which has been held by some of Canada's greatest sons none can doubt.

GUARDED GATES

No vast extremes of joy and strife
Explain the subtle source of life;
None may unlock, with bated breath,
The guarded gate of sunless death.
Majestic science has no key
To secrets of infinity;
These are the mysteries sublime,
Unfathomed since the birth of time.

Hamilton Williams

The Way of the Primal

BY WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY

Illustrated by H. F. Fisk

WE sat on the after-deck of the Japanese steamship plowing and plashing its way across the lonely Pacific. Around us enveloped the mellow mystery of the tropical night. There were seven of us; the hour was one o'clock in the morning. The only lights burning on the swaying liner were the occasional bulbs strung along the promenade-deck or hung at the entrance to the stairways.

The figure in the center of our group was Dr. Sampson, the ship's surgeon. The doctor's ukulele was quiet. We had "sung ourselves out" and reached the stage of reminiscence. The doctor was a big, jovial fellow, as much of a social asset as a medical necessity.

As he finished an account of his experience in the great typhoon of 1898, Lyons yawned sleepily and rose.

"I think I'll turn in, boys," he said. "Good night!"

As he left us, Parker looked after him ruefully.

"A mighty fine fellow," he commented. "But why, oh, why does he happen to be a missionary?"

Dr. Sampson sobered.

"Don't talk that way, son. It shows you've never been in the Orient. You'll find out here that no one makes sport of the missionaries. The kind that come out nowadays are really fine people—the salvation of our country and the real sponsors of its prestige."

Mason laughed.

"But how he does hate the Beecher woman!"

"What Beecher woman?" the doctor demanded.

"Oh, that fresh old hen around the boat who thinks she can sing. Didn't you hear the concert she gave in the saloon this evening?"

"Why does he hate her?"

"I wouldn't call it hate. Perhaps that's an unkind word. He simply hasn't any use for the woman, and can't conceal the fact. I suppose it's because they're such opposite types."

Shirley spoke up.

"He dislikes her because she hasn't a brain in her head, and she's been trying to ensnare him to listen to her troubles ever since we left Honolulu. He's that kind of man—that a woman goes to with her troubles."

"What kind of troubles is it that she wants to tell him?"

"You can search me—some sort of domestic altercation she's just had with her husband, with the scandal aired in the yellow newspapers. She seems to take it for granted that everybody's read about it and knows her, and she tries to defend herself before she's accused."

"Which sort of makes her out guilty, eh? Well, I don't blame Lyons for not wanting to get mixed up with her. It's funny how the passengers in these overseas boats fall into classes. There's always that kind of woman on a long voyage. A ship's worse than a small New England village, too. Within forty-eight hours everybody on board seems to know all about everybody else's business, and to rate the ne'er-do-wells accordingly. This Beecher woman, however—what does she have to say about herself?"

"She claims she's an opera singer, and she's always at the piano to prove it. The very first night out she spotted Lyons and tried to get him to sing with her. He refused, as politely as he could, and avoided her as if there was something shameful in being seen talking to her. It's rather amusing. Half a dozen times since I've seen her try all the tricks of her sex on him, until some one told her he was a missionary. That sort of balked her. Then it peeved

THAT SHE WAS SHORT OF FUNDS I KNEW QUICK ENOUGH, BECAUSE I SAW THE SON OF THE INDIAN OIL MAN CLANDESTINELY LOANING HER MONEY

her. After that she seemed more determined than ever to land him." Shirley lighted a fresh cigarette. As he tossed the match over the edge of the railing into the velvet blackness he declared: "I wonder what would happen if a man of Lyons's type—clean-cut, high-principled, good-looking, well educated—should be cast away on a desert island with a woman like this stage beauty, Mme. Beecher. How would the drama work out?"

Dr. Sampson suddenly laid his ukulele on the floor.

"I'll tell you how it would work out," he declared grimly, "for I have seen that very thing happen!"

We gave our amazement expression.

"I'll tell you just one more story, boys, since you've brought this subject up so uncannily; then I'm going to bed."

And the doctor spun us a final yarn. It was a strange story. I cannot repeat it in Dr. Sampson's exact language. I give it in the first person for the sake of doing away with the extra quotation-marks. And I repeat it because it may hold a weird little

moral from which some sex cynics can derive benefit. Perhaps so!

II

You boys asked me earlier this evening if I'd ever been shipwrecked. I told you I'd been shipwrecked twice. On the second of my ill-fated voyages we carried the Van Alstane woman.

I doubt if her name was Van Alstane. I'd rather bet that originally it had been Mary Jones or Susie Smith; for underneath all her sophistication and flub-dub and cosmetics, it didn't take a clever man to recognize that she was a cheap woman.

I think it was the seventh voyage I'd made for this company. We were returning to San Francisco from Yokohama; and we hadn't been out of sight of land five hours before we had it impressed upon us that the Van Alstane woman was among those present.

She tried to act like a girl of twenty or twenty-five, but she fooled nobody except herself. Every woman on the boat—and a few men—saw that she was nearer forty. Her only redeeming physical feature was a riot of copper hair, gorgeous hair, that once seen was never to be forgotten. But sometimes she coiled it high on her head, disclosing her neck in the back; and then the exposure showed the telltale wrinkles of fading beauty and dissipation.

We carried a different crowd with us in those days. Every one traveling to the Orient in these war times is going out because of some deadly serious business. Back in 1902 we had the usual quota of tourists, adventurers, and adventuresses, and the more entertaining class of rich globe-trotters. And among the male element the Van Alstane woman started out to make a hit. She did! Within two days she had the son of a rich Indian oil man trotting at her heels like a dog, and every woman on the boat hated her.

At first I thought she was just a plain female crook, out to relieve some light-headed Johnny of his wad. As the voyage progressed, I learned her story.

She'd been a vaudeville actress back in America, where she'd ensnared a young Fifth Avenue lounge-lizard, whose father operated in Wall Street. His family had more money than they could spend, and they told the boy to help himself and go to the devil. He needed no second invitation. He ran the usual gamut of fast company and chorus-girls until he met our highly colored lady passenger. There ensued an elopement to Japan and a disinheritance on the part of the family, who acquired some sense about eleven hours tardy.

You know how such affairs usually turn out when the source of money is suddenly extinguished. They had a quarrel, there was a reconciliation with the family, and Johnny deserted his stage bride in the Orient, leaving her to get a living and a passage homeward by her wits. She was returning on this particular voyage when I first ran across her—she having managed to turn the trick in the Orient for a matter of five or six years after the domestic tragedy.

That she was short of funds I knew quick enough, because I saw the son of the Indian oil man clandestinely loaning her money before we'd reached the first Sunday of the trip. I felt that the boy was marked for slaughter before we floated in through the Golden Gate, and I determined to keep an eye on him. The company couldn't afford to have any scandal jeopardize its reputable passengers through the machinations of an overwise woman.

And that brings the Rev. Arthur Bishop into the story.

The Rev. Arthur Bishop was a young missionary, going home on his first furlough. He didn't look like a missionary, as you people back in the States popularly conceive the type. He was just a wholesome, good-natured, fun-loving young man, as clean-minded as a new-born babe. Only he was world-wise—the Orient attends to such matters. And along with his red-blooded character he could preach the finest sermon I ever heard from the lips of mortal man. I heard him twice on Sunday morning in the saloon before the accident happened.

I wish I could draw a portrait of young Bishop that you'd understand. It would be difficult. Young men like him don't usually give their lives to foreign missionary work. For a time he puzzled me. I was bewildered by the very simplicity of his character. Then I learned that his father and mother had both been missionaries before him, although he had been born in America.

He was about the finest type of high-minded, altruistic, polished young American you can find the globe over. Every time I

looked at him I felt a thrill of pride that such a man was passing his life in a foreign land as a representative of the best that the Anglo-Saxon race has to offer humanity.

This was the fellow that the Van Alstane woman marked for her prey, along with the oil man's son. I figure she thought, from his boyishness and his calling, he would be easy picking.

She found out differently.

III

One evening she saw young Bishop sitting alone in the main saloon. She tripped over and fluffed down beside him. Viewed from afar she was a dream. Inventoried as near as Bishop was thereby placed to her, she was still a dream if you didn't know the rottenness underneath the chiffon and tinsel. Her gown was flesh-pink, soft and untrimmed. She wore a turquoise-blue satin girdle, cut so low that any normal man simply couldn't help dropping his eyes after he looked at it. She also wore a string of pearls so lavish that everybody knew they were paste. This combination with the riotous burnt-copper of her hair and cherry-black eyes was simply stunning. Yet, somehow, when she opened her pencil-touched lips to speak, you recognized her shallowness and mummery, and were disgusted.

"Oh, Mr. Bishop!" she cried, with an attempt at kittenish cuteness. "I've just learned that you are a missionary 'way up in the heart of north China. And I'm so interested in missionaries! Won't you tell me all about your work and your wonderful people? For I'm sure they *are* wonderful," she gushed, "or you wouldn't stay and work among them!"

Bishop recoiled instinctively before the fluffy deadliness of the encounter. The normal man shoved suddenly into juxtaposition with a fast woman is more or less frightened. He feels at a disadvantage. There is no telling what the woman may do next. All ordinary standards of conventionality are upset, and the poor male has nothing to go by.

Bishop was a normal man—very normal and human; yet he had what a lot of average men have not. He had a poise and a certain boyish good-nature which disarmed by its very frankness.

He paled for a moment, then collected himself. The instinctive dislike of his kind for her kind was written plainly on his features; but there was his poise, and he was always the gentleman.

"I'm afraid that's a pretty large order," he said, "telling you all about my Chinese people. Why are you interested?"

His smile died, and he looked at her coldly. The woman was a bit confused. The implication in his question was something she was not prepared for.

"Oh, I'm—I'm—always interested in the work of interesting people," she stammered.

The compliment was so evident that it was crass as the texture of her flesh under the cosmetics.

"It would take a long time to tell you," he said stiffly. "Isn't Mr. Du Val singing beautifully this evening?"

The woman colored. The abrupt change of subject was a rebuke so curt that it made her lips set grimly.

"Yes," she replied in kind, without interest. "But you can at least tell me something about yourself, Mr. Bishop. You have such an interesting personality!"

The boy's fine face showed signs of being bored. As you might expect from one of her kind, when it came to a really brainy man she was laying it on too thickly.

"About myself—why?" he said again.

"Oh," she answered, "just because. A woman's curiosity."

"Well," he answered, "just between you and me, because you have asked me in confidence, I am not a missionary at all. I have no interest in the people of north China. The truth is that I am a bandit. I am the head of a band of Mongolian villains who sally forth at least twice a week and prey upon women and children."

She sat up rather rigidly.

"You are facetious, Mr. Bishop!"

"I never was more serious in my life," he told her.

She bit her lip. It was plain that she had failed in her appraisal. He was no mollycoddle.

"I shall keep at you," she declared, "until you tell me all about your wonderful work. I do so admire real men who give their lives for the cause of humanity!"

"Madam," he replied laughingly, "you really possess a secret that four great governments would give their exchequers to know. I hope you will not violate my confidence."

She leaned over dangerously close to him and tapped his nose with the feathery fan which she carried.

FIFTY OR A HUNDRED PEOPLE—FOR THEY SWARMED OVER THE LIFE-BOAT LIKE ANTS—WERE TUMBLED OFF MERCILESSLY INTO THE YAWNING GULF. ONLY TWO KEPT THEIR HOLD

"Naughty, naughty Mr. Missionary!" she chided him. "Afraid of a petticoat!"

"No," he corrected her gravely, "not afraid of a petticoat; perhaps merely estimating the one inside the petticoat better than she imagines."

When he ceased speaking, there came a brittle silence.

It was an awful slam, almost an insult. It would have been an insult if you or I had said it; but his voice, manner, and mirthful eyes, though they did contain a look somewhat contemptuous, turned the edge of that insult.

The woman choked back a stinging retort. After fumbling with the feathery fan for a moment, she arose with apparent carelessness.

"I plainly see that you and I do not understand each other," she said. "I see, too, that I've got my work cut out for me on this voyage to change your preconceived opinion."

It was a challenge. She left him. His face made an unconscious grimace. He realized that until we reached Frisco, and he could make good his escape, he was going to be harassed by a nuisance.

A couple of days went by. Several times we saw the Van Alstane woman trying

unsuccessfully to intrigue him. She bribed the Jap deck-steward to place her chair beside his. When he found it out, he had his own removed to the other side of the ship. She tackled him two or three times more in the lounging-saloon, principally in the evening. It got so bad that the man began to spend his evenings in his stuffy little stateroom, reading.

I began to grow nettled. It was time to tell this primrose woman to stop bothering the male passengers when they made it quite evident they had no desire for her company. I began to fear some sort of frame-up. The woman was so angry over his snubs and repulses that I fully expected her revenge to take the form of a nasty maneuver—some old trick like being found in his stateroom in dishabille, to lock herself in with him when he entered and then scream for help.

I was worrying over it when the unexpected happened. Young Bishop suddenly began to show signs of interest in the woman. Instead of repelling her, he began to seek her out and invent excuses for talking with her. What had happened? Then a tea-merchant going home from Ceylon enlightened me.

"We were up in the smoking-room the other evening," he said, "and Brabson tackled the young fellow for being a missionary. You know Brabson hates all missionaries. They've thrown a monkey-wrench occasionally into some of his schemes for acquiring mining interests from the Chinese. He bawled Bishop and his kind out properly.

"'You pious young pulpit-pounder and international busybody,' says he, 'if you're so dead set on converting somebody, why don't you begin at home? God knows there's enough of your own kind that need it!'

"Bishop took all his talk like a perfect gentleman, for he realized that Brabson was half intoxicated.

"'Very good,' he said with a smile, 'I'll make it my business in the morning to start in with yourself.'

"The crowd tittered. It made Brabson blasphemous.

"'I'll pass,' he snarled. 'I've got about as much use for religion as for a mangy Chinese rat-catcher; but if you'll tackle the Van Alstane woman first, and show any sort of result on her, I might consider listening to you!'"

I don't know whether it was Brabson's taunt, or the idea he had suggested; but in a few days all of us saw that Bishop was indeed fighting the devil with fire. He had deliberately set out to convert the Van Alstane woman before we reached San Francisco.

Useless? Of course it was useless. You can't make velvet out of sow's ear. But I have to give the lad credit; he tried. They had long talks about himself, his work among the Chinese, the great and beautiful ideal and purpose back of it all. The Van Alstane woman lay back beside him in her steamer chair, and affected to be interested; but she wasn't interested. He talked clean over her head. And while he did, she stretched sensuously beside him and tried every trick and wile of the devil to divert his attention from the subject he was discussing to herself and the vaster and more important subject, to her, of love and illicit physical passion.

When he spoke on heathen immorality, her eyes held a gleam of interest; but it quickly faded when he applied the remedy of practical Christianity or the activities of the medical missionary. She was a bad one, that petticoat—simply vile—one of nature's incorrigibles.

And while the contest was progressing full blast, with all the ship wise and watching, the accident happened.

IV

We were two days out from Honolulu. We'd been having trouble with the steam-gages on one of our boilers ever since we'd left Japan. Our boat, the old Kobe Maru, was struggling along at about four knots reduced speed and two days behind schedule. To make things worse, it was the season of equatorial storms, and for several days the weather had been ominous. At night the sun sank in a wild and weird-looking sky, and each morning the sea would be just a bit rougher.

The passengers began to be affected with seasickness. Chairs were increasingly empty in the dining-saloon. The number of meals ordered to the cabins became a nuisance. And about half past ten o'clock one night, with the ship rocking alarmingly, the tragedy happened.

The traitorous boiler exploded!

I can't describe that explosion. One of the men in the boat that was subsequently saved told me that it sounded and felt as

WE SIGHTED THEM THROUGH THE GLASSES, AND WERE IMPRESSED BY THEIR BEHAVIOR THAT THEY WERE NOT SAVAGES

if the shredded-wheat factory had gone over the cliff at Niagara Falls and the Kobe Maru had been directly underneath when it landed.

I was in one of the forward cabins, attending a passenger who had contracted pneumonia. I was in the act of setting a bottle inside the rack above the wash-stand when a shock went through the ship as if it had rammed head-on against the dock at Frisco without bothering to shut off the engines. I was thrown heavily against the opposite wall. My patient was crumpled at the foot of his berth. The noise came afterward.

It wasn't a quick, sharp report. It was a prolonged muffled roar. Screams followed —terrific, sickening screams from the injured and dying. The Jap crew tumbled from all directions. So did the passengers. Half-clothed men, women in their night-clothes, shrieking children—all added to the confusion. Two or three of the ship's officers were vainly trying to make themselves heard. The vessel was tilting ominously down toward the center.

The surge of hysterical humanity in the narrow passageways bore me out on the deck. It was raining. The moment the engines had stopped, with an awful roar of escaping steam, the Pacific had taken charge of the old Kobe Maru. She was turning around in crazy circles. There was neither time nor sense for the carefully practised fire-drill. The pandemonium was terrific.

And in the center of the vessel, sweeping wildly up around a demolished smoke-stack, tore a great pillar of livid flame, ending in thunderous darkness.

I can't recollect connectedly the events of the next few minutes. Battered like an egg-shell, its inwards being devoured with uncanny swiftness by the flames, that bruised and bleeding hulk succumbed weakly to the mighty wrath which had attacked her. Men pounded one another over the heads and did murder. Cravens, possessed of the devil, stamped on human features and clawed their way into the life-boats. Half-naked people fumbled hysterically with life-belts. They dropped off into the awful depths of the ocean, with many of them half fastened. I saw a woman with clothing aflame leap over the railing, in her arms an unconscious baby. She disappeared with a hiss of fire and steam into the water, though the hiss was drowned in the terrific uproar going on all about me.

The whole tragedy ended as quickly as it came. I think the boat sank in ten minutes.

I had schooled myself for such an emergency. I was supposed to command life-boat No. 11, on A deck, forward. I got there by scaling the outer railings of the deck structure. Every light in the steamer had been extinguished, and there were neither moon nor stars. Only the hellish illumination of the conflagration lighted the mêlée.

The whole upper deck was a shrieking, clawing, death-dealing mob, surging wildly about in the light of the demoniacal furnace, every one for himself.

I tried to make myself heard. I shouted orders; but you can't order or intimidate crazy people. Every man and woman was bereft of all reason. It was every one for himself, and the devil take the hindmost; and the devil did take the hindmost. He took more than the hindmost—he took nearly everybody.

As I straddled the railing, helpless, I saw a sight as in a nightmare. In the light of the devastating flames a life-boat was being lowered. The tackle jammed at the forward end, while the after end kept on lowering. Fifty or a hundred people—for they swarmed over it like ants—were tumbled off mercilessly into the yawning gulf. Only two succeeded in keeping their hold.

I saw them plainly. One was the Van Alstane woman, in a state of almost complete nudity; the other was the Rev. Arthur Bishop.

One of Bishop's hands gripped the edge with a clutch of iron; the other held the limp body of a child. He had been shoving it in when the lowering started. He had lost his balance, and had clutched the boat to keep from being knocked off into the water. Then a howling, locoed Jap reached forward and severed the ropes of the tackle with his knife. The boat slapped down into the water. The weight of the child was more than human strength could retain, and it slipped from Bishop's grasp and disappeared.

As some one bludgeoned me from behind, and I went down, I saw a great wave catch that life-boat, in which were only Arthur Bishop and the primrose woman, and whirl it away from the ship. With a mighty

heave it was gone in the blackness of the night.

V

How was I saved?

I don't remember.

In the water my unconscious body had become entangled in some ropes and wreckage which had held my head above the surface. I awoke in the cabin of a United States naval officer. A cruiser, the old Minnesota, bound from Honolulu to Yokohama, passed that way about ten o'clock the next morning. It picked up one lifeboat containing fifty-two half-crazed people, myself, and a little Jap steward who had kept himself alive through that awful night by clinging to a bit of wreckage.

By the time we reached Japan I was myself again. The company found me a berth as surgeon on the boat we're riding upon this moment. I have been here ever since.

What became of the Rev. Arthur Bishop and the cheap Van Alstane woman?

I'll tell you.

About eight years afterward I got a furlough. I joined two San Francisco friends on their yacht, and we went cruising down among the Marshall Islands. The Marshall Islands are a volcanic group one or two hundred miles in a southwesterly direction from the spot where the explosion happened. The wind had been blowing from the northeast on the night of the Kobe Maru tragedy.

We had been down there about three weeks, lazing around generally, and carrying on some minor explorations in which I had been interested, when a friend of mine named Harrison stumbled down into the cabin one noontime with some hysterical gibberish about there being two people trying to signal to us from an island off toward the eastward.

We sighted them through the glasses, and were impressed by their behavior that they were not savages. We got into the launch and started shoreward.

It took us an hour to reach them. Strange to say, as we approached, they did not run at once to meet us.

We finally came up to them. There were, however, more than the two we had first seen. There were six of them in all.

Four of them were children, two boys and two girls. One was a man—an awful-looking brute of a man, a picture out of the stone age, who growled gutturally and threateningly from the depths of his matted beard.

The other was a woman—a woman with a wild, riotous growth of copper-colored hair that almost enveloped her scantily clothed body; but on her features there was a look of the most angelic tenderness, sweetness, purity, and maternal love that I have ever seen on a human countenance.

HOMEWARD BOUND

THE rhythmic throb of the iron heart
That drives the ship athwart the foam
Is music sweet, for on the chart
We lay our course for home, sweet home!

Our stokers toil in the blinding night
With bar and hoe and clanking claw,
While Cupid's stokers keep alight
The fire of love like flaming straw.

Dark days have passed since we parted, dear,
In dim half light of dewy spring;
But stanch as steel of engine-gear
The bonds of love are found to cling.

The rhythmic throb of the iron heart
That soon will bring my love to view
Now plays one strain of magic art—
A haunting strain of home and you!

John Lawrence

Will the Sun Ever Be Extinguished?

WHY THE SOLAR LIGHT AND HEAT ARE NOT LIKELY TO LAST FOREVER, AND WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE EARTH WHEN THEY FAIL

By Charles Nevers Holmes

COMPARED with the earth, the sun is a vast body, indeed about 1,300,000 times as large as our world. Now, our world has a cubic capacity of 260,000,000,000 miles, so that by simple multiplication we can obtain a row of figures approximating the mass of the sun. To put it in another way, the sun's diameter is 866,400 miles, whereas the earth's is only 7,918 miles. Were the sun at the same distance from us as the moon, it would appear about 126,000 times as large; but we should be able to behold—if we could exist in its fiery glow—only a part of the solar surface. In order to comprehend more adequately the real magnitude of the sun, we should imagine to ourselves its total surface of more than 2,300,000,000,000 square miles, radiating its stupendous outflow of light and heat. It is fortunate that our great luminary is so far away—at an average distance of 92,900,000 miles. We vary in our distance from him about 3,000,000 miles, the sun being, it may seem strange to say, farther from us of the northern hemisphere in summer than in winter.

Naturally, we are interested in considering how terrific must be the heat at the solar surface. This temperature has been variously estimated, some calculations fixing it at about 9,000 degrees Fahrenheit, while others give a still higher figure. With respect to the light-rays radiated from the solar surface into space, it has been estimated that the great sky-beacon illuminates our earth with about 1,600 billion billion times as much light as would a candle placed at the same distance. To express this in figures requires a row of twenty ciphers after the first two digits.

Of course, our world receives only a very tiny part of the total light-radiations from the sun. To express the full light-power of the central luminary, we should multiply the solar illumination of the earth's surface 2,200,000,000 times.

Not only does the sun radiate into space a stupendous candle-power, but it also possesses a dazzling intensity, estimated at 190,000 times the brightness of a candle-flame, or 150 times the brilliance of a calcium light. And we should remember that our sun is not at all an imposing body when compared with some other suns in the universe, such a star as Arcturus, for example, being at least 1,000 times as large.

As would be supposed, various theories have been advanced to explain why our sun's celestial furnace does not burn itself out. When we consider the tremendous outpouring of its light and heat into space, century after century, it seems remarkable indeed that these can continue without any apparent decrease in their power.

At one time it was suggested that the solar light and heat may be generated by the constant hammering of vast numbers of aerolites falling upon the sun's surface and heating it, just as an anvil can be heated by rapid strokes of a hammer. It has also been conjectured that radium or some similar substance—perhaps some element about which we know nothing—maintains the sun at its present high temperature; but a more reasonable theory explains the solar light and heat as the result of a gradual contraction, due to the action of gravity.

As we well know, all terrestrial bodies are attracted toward the center of the earth.

In the case of the sun, this attraction of gravity would tend to contract its plastic form, thus making the great luminary smaller and its body denser. This contraction would create more heat, and at the same time would force the sun to radiate light and heat into space. Light and heat would be expelled from its body, somewhat as water is squeezed from a sponge when contracted by the pressure of the hand. It has been estimated that an annual shrinkage of about two hundred feet, or perhaps a little less, in the solar diameter would be sufficient, in the sun's present condition, to continue its output of light and heat.

It seems practically certain, however, that unless some unknown factor intervenes, this stupendous outpouring of heat and light will in time become more and more diminished in profusion. According to the theory now generally accepted, the contraction of the sun's body will cause it to become gradually denser and denser, until at last it will cease to radiate visible light and sensible heat. The era when this will come to pass has been variously estimated, but there can be no doubt—unless unknown conditions exist—that it will occur within some millions of years.

Indeed, it is easy to see how greatly an annual shrinkage of two hundred feet in the solar diameter would affect the physical appearance of our sun within ten million years. At the end of that time, if the rate of contraction should be maintained, the diameter of the great luminary would be about 488,000 miles, instead of 866,400 miles. With increasing density, however, the contraction would be likely to decrease. Whatever the precise rate might be, increasing density and decreasing contraction would result in less light and heat being radiated into space; so that it is very probable that at the conclusion of ten million years the sun will cease to be of any practical use as our earth's sky-beacon and sky-furnace.

As has already been said, unknown conditions may now be present, or may arise in the future, which will prolong for ages the natural life of our sun. As yet we possess only limited knowledge concerning the interior of the sun's body. As it becomes denser, reactions may occur within it to create additional light and heat. As already stated, it may be that radium or similar substances contribute to its energies.

According to the best astronomical information of to-day, the sun's light and heat will eventually be extinguished; but it seems certain that Sol will shine upon our earth without any noticeable difference for thousands of years to come. Ten million years from to-day it is possible, and even probable, that he will still be emitting some light and heat, although not enough to be perceptible to the beings then inhabiting our world.

At that very remote period the sun may still be faintly visible, exhibiting an appearance somewhat like the moon when fully eclipsed. Moreover, beneath its surface there will exist an intense heat, and at times tremendous volcanic eruptions will take place, emitting local light and heat. Our earth, however, will be in practical darkness and surrounded by a very low temperature. We shall have only dim rays from distant stars, and perhaps such artificial means of creating light and heat as may be provided by the genius of human beings who may survive at that distant day.

Millions of years hence—thousands of centuries! And then a solar system without visible sun or planet, speeding swiftly through space toward an unknown destiny. But perhaps, long before that era, before our sun's light and heat are extinguished, our system may come within the power of some other and greater sun, which may ruthlessly destroy it, or may take it under a beneficent control, illuminating and warming our planet home for millions and millions of years.

THE WANDERER

THE wind that scurries o'er the sea
Is like a nomad, wandering free,
Whose love of life is just to roam
Forever from the rest of home,
Endowed with wings that swiftly fly
Between the open sea and sky.

William Hamilton Hayne

An Unreal Estate Deal

BY CLARENCE MEILY

Illustrated by George Brehm

TO as knowing an individual as Mr. Bushrod Keane, astonishment was a rare emotion. Hence the shock of the disclosure made by his uncle's will was all the more pronounced. He had expected, in the due course of mournful but inevitable events, to become his uncle's heir; and as he was his kinsman's only near relative, this expectation could not be regarded as wholly unreasonable. But he had expected to assumé this position without conditions or provisos. Certainly he had not expected to be tested like an aviator or examined like a public accountant. Had Mr. Keane's probity been under suspicion, he would have experienced no surprise and no great resentment; he might even have put a flattering interpretation upon it. But to have his business capacity doubted, his shrewdness impugned — this left him too bewildered even for anger.

Yet what other meaning could be put upon that singular stipulation that the sixty thousand dollars constituting the estate was not to be paid over to him unless, within the six months following his uncle's death, he could show to the trustee, old Barnabas Widdleby, that he had fifteen thousand dollars of his own? Did not that imply a suspicion touching his financial prowess? And, moreover, as Mr. Keane realized with a qualm, he did not have the fifteen thousand dollars.

Mr. Keane was not long in fixing on Widdleby, the time-honored crony of his late uncle, as the real author of this amazing requirement. In the event that he did not meet the test, the estate was to go to a home for aged people which Widdleby had himself endowed to the limit of his means, and in which he presumably expected to spend his remaining years. That in itself was enough, in Mr. Keane's shrewd estimation, to fix the blame. It was Widdleby's indirect way of getting the benefit of the estate for himself. Added to this were sundry base insinuations and innuendos in the trustee's letter enclosing a copy of the will, such as the hypocritical hope that wildcat speculation had not made it impossible for him to comply with the condition, and the hollow advice to put the legacy, in case he got it, into sound investments, which, Mr. Keane felt, showed conclusively who was at the bottom of it.

All of which plausible and satisfying surmise was, however, as the dieticians say, devoid of nutritive value. Recognizing this, Mr. Keane, with his customary generalship and practical energy, set about inventorying his tangible assets. The list was not encouraging. In addition to his office furniture and personal effects, he had some two hundred dollars in bank, an automobile of which it could be said that in the nature of things it must have been new once, and the title to Montrose Heights Subdivision, the same being an addition to the city in which Mr. Keane lived, of which the city remained placidly, not to say exasperatingly, unaware. It was matters such as Montrose Heights, probably, which Trustee Widdleby had in mind when he mentioned wildcat speculation.

Some years before, the city which Mr. Keane favored with his residence had experienced a real-estate boom. The eager fraternity of real-estate agents, of whom Mr. Keane was a leading spirit, had plotted additions and parks and subdivisions and other addenda to the metropolis for a radius of several miles beyond its municipal limits, and when the boom collapsed these outlying and deflated hopes remained on the map as lots and streets and alleys, but became in reality weed-grown acreage, their graded roadways obscured by rank grasses, their cement walks cracked and broken,

their only inhabitants the gopher and the wire-snake.

The boom had been to Mr. Keane almost a personal possession. He had been in it "up to his neck," as he said, the trouble being, as with so many swimmers in the treacherous waters of speculation, that he had stayed in too long. As a consequence, to press the metaphor to its logical conclusion, he had developed a bad case of financial cramp. All of his winnings up to that time had gone into Montrose Heights and into the advertising campaign which, in the fag-end of the boom period, had failed to put it across. Mr. Keane had at last emerged from the welter with a perfectly valid title to some thirty acres of barren, gravelly hilltop, worth, perhaps, fifty dollars an acre to any one who could discover a productive use for it. That—and an acquaintance with J. Whiffington Fish, to whom his thoughts reverted in the present emergency.

II

Mr. Keane had met Mr. Fish in the normal course of the business of each, when Mr. Fish had attempted to sell him certain oil stock of large promise but undated performance, and he, in turn, had endeavored to interest Mr. Fish in Montrose Heights. Both efforts having signally failed, they had formed a friendship based upon profound mutual esteem.

Mr. Fish was a large man of funereal aspect who possessed a peculiar proficiency in his chosen field. His scheme of salesmanship was a sort of reverse English to that of the conventional booster. Where the average vendor of insecure securities brimmed with optimism and beamed with hope, Mr. Fish exhaled only melancholy doubt and chill misgiving. Others might promise; he warned. He was the embodied essence of caution, conservatism, and prudent counsel. Admitting, as the incontestable facts forced him grudgingly to do, that the particular stock he was handling would infallibly bring large returns, he nevertheless advised against its purchase on the ground that the buyer, inexperienced in the manipulation of great wealth, would surely lose it again through the machinations of conscienceless swindlers such as are always on the lookout for the unwary. If, nevertheless, the foolhardy individual was determined to go ahead and win, he exacted as a condition of the sale a pledge that the profits should be put into government bonds.

In the smaller towns where Mr. Fish by preference operated, his sad exterior, his stern reprobation of all forms of financial hazard, his paternal anxiety for the safety of those who dealt with him, combined to give him a unique popularity. Bankers banked on him and trustees trusted him, and comfortable widows in need of pecuniary guidance invited him to tea. He had even been known to go back again to places he had once worked, without encountering any further embarrassment than that incident to pointing out to his investors that he had formally advised them not to buy.

Having, in his own experience, demonstrated the hollowness of the usual methods of promotion, Mr. Keane now turned in the adventuresomeness of despair to Mr. Fish.

"Certainly it can be done," Mr. Fish reluctantly acknowledged, when he had listened to the complete story of Mr. Keane's expectations and disappointments, his necessities and desires. "It is always easy to get money. The difficult thing is to know how to spend it. All those who have got it will tell you so."

"They wouldn't spend it for these Montrose Heights lots, anyway," said Mr. Keane in bitter reminiscence.

"They will when presented in a properly attractive guise," Mr. Fish declared sadly. "It will be a further demonstration of the instability of fortune. What I would suggest would be bonds."

"Yes?" said Mr. Keane with dawning confidence.

"I will incorporate a land, loan, and investment company, to which you will give a mortgage on this tract, say, for a hundred thousand dollars. In return, the company will give you a contract to loan you sixty thousand dollars in four instalments, the first to be paid in time to comply with your uncle's will. The company will retain forty thousand as its commission. It will issue one hundred thousand dollars' worth of bonds on the security of this mortgage for sale to the public at par. I will personally undertake the sale of the bonds."

Mr. Keane fell to studying this plan with a care, not to say a suspicion, that was a tribute to his friend.

"You will organize the company," he remarked. "Where do I come in?"

"It will be better for you not to figure as a stockholder," Mr. Fish pointed out. "In that way you will be relieved from responsibility for any representations it may

be necessary to make to the public. You must remember that you are about to become the owner of a legacy that consists of real money. For a time, at least, you will be solvent. I want to protect you. In fact, I am determined to do so. We will even put a clause in the mortgage relieving you from personal liability."

"But how do I know I'll ever get this loan?" argued Mr. Keane, bringing into play that exceptional cleverness with which he felt himself endowed, but which Uncle William had seemingly overlooked. "You will have the bonds and the mortgage. I won't have anything but a contract."

Mr. Fish leaned forward and laid his hand shieldingly upon the other's shoulders.

"You are distraught, my boy," he said. "Anxiety has disturbed your poise. But I want to satisfy you. I am going to satisfy you. I am going to see that you are safeguarded absolutely. It always pains me to deal in this antagonistic way with a friend, but I recognize your right, and I commend your judgment. You shall name your own man as secretary and treasurer of the company. He will be your representative, and he will handle all the funds. It will be just the same as if you had charge of the money yourself."

At this, Mr. Keane, knowing his friend, rose in alarm.

"Say," he ejaculated, "what are you trying to put over, anyway? How do I know there will ever be any funds? How do I know you won't stand in with old Widdleby and tow me along till the last minute and then not come across even with fifteen thousand dollars, so I'll lose everything? I've got to have some guarantee in this business."

"IT'S A GO," HE ASSENTED. "I WISH I KNEW MORE YOUNG MEN LIKE YOU!"

Mr. Fish leaned back and stroked his cheek with every appearance of deep pride in his young friend's discernment, coupled with pain that he himself should be so misjudged.

"Name your own terms, Bushrod," he said.

Mr. Keane thought swiftly, brilliantly, with that penetration which he himself had come to recognize as his most salient characteristic.

"I'll tell you what," he said at length, "I've got to have some of those bonds. Enough to cover that fifteen thousand I've

got to show Widdleby, anyway. Say about twenty thousand dollars' worth, in case I've got to sell in a hurry and at a discount. I'll turn 'em back when I get the fifteen thousand in cash. Is that a go?"

In the depths of Mr. Fish's somber eyes appeared something strangely resembling a shadowy smile.

"It's a go," he assented. "I wish I knew more young men like you!"

III

THE proceedings for the incorporation of the Lombard Land, Loan, and Investment Company went forward briskly, and as papers were signed, meetings held, a seal procured, and stock certificates and elaborately engraved and gilded bonds ordered from the printer, Mr. Keane's spirits rose until he fairly breathed the old-time boom atmosphere of zip and hustle. He regretted that his rôle of proprietor of Montrose Heights, the mortgage on which was to be the company's chief and, indeed, only asset, prevented him from also being an incorporator. He would have enjoyed it so. For his representative in the company he chose Mr. Simeon Truax, as the only one among his acquaintances who could be trusted around a corner, the corner being duly picketed beforehand.

Mr. Truax was a mild-mannered little man who made an uncertain livelihood by acting as dummy in any transaction needing such—a rôle for which nature had peculiarly fitted him. Though Mr. Keane would have preferred a more alert and knowing agent, one better fitted to cope with a state of affairs that might become too Fishy, he felt that the peril of such a selection from among his friends would outweigh the danger arising from Mr. Truax's ingenuousness, and so reconciled himself to Simeon as the least of alternative evils. He determined, moreover, to keep a close watch on matters himself.

On his part, Mr. Fish had invited an old and valued coadjutor named Bunker to act as president of the company, reserving for himself the modest place of vice-president and sales-manager. The machinery of legerdemain being thus assembled, the mortgage duly executed, the bonds printed, signed, and sealed with wafer and ribbon, and twenty of them of the face value of one thousand each—the same representing Mr. Keane's extra margin of safety — being locked up in that astute gentleman's safe, he and Mr. Fish met privately for a final discussion of prospects and portents.

"There's one thing," Mr. Keane shrewdly pointed out, "you can't try to sell any of this stuff anywhere within a hundred miles of this town. If you do, you'll be likely to run against somebody who's been here and knows too much about real estate. You've got to keep outside the danger zone."

Mr. Fish intimated his settled intention of carrying on at a safe distance from the security offered.

"And there's another thing," continued Mr. Keane. "Some of these gudgeons you get on the hook may want documentary evidence of values. It would be a pretty nifty thing to have a bank appraisal of the property, wouldn't it?"

"What?" exclaimed Mr. Fish, startled out of his usual calm. "You're not ill, Bushrod?"

Mr. Keane winked and grinned, thereby testifying that he was not at all ill. He rummaged a moment in one of the bottom drawers of his desk and brought forth a flamboyant-looking paper. He held it out in triumph. Mr. Fish stared at it with emotion that was beyond question genuine.

"Where did you get it?" he asked in awe.

"It" was a bank appraisal of Montrose Heights at the scintillating sum of two hundred thousand dollars.

"Boom values," snickered Mr. Keane in explanation. "Two hundred lots at a thousand dollars a lot. Even the banks were a little crazy then. You notice the date is three years ago. But that won't hurt any. Most people will conclude that it's worth still more now. I can furnish you with all the copies you want."

Mr. Fish folded the paper reverently and put it in his pocket.

"With this," he said, almost tearfully, "I could sell these bonds to the Secretary of the United States Treasury."

There followed a lengthening pause, during which the high enthusiasm of the two friends evanesced to a frigid attitude of mutual wariness.

"It's a fine day," observed Mr. Fish.

"It is so," assented Mr. Keane.

"Bushrod," said Mr. Fish at last with feeling, "now that you are about to inherit sixty thousand dollars through my efforts, does it not occur to you that a suitable honorarium—say about one-third of that amount—should be paid to me personally

as a just recognition of my services? Does it not occur to you that such would be fitting?"

"It does not," said Mr. Keane coldly. "Your proposition was to sell a hundred thousand dollars' worth of bonds and take forty per cent of that as your compensation. In view of the fact that I've furnished the security and most of the selling argument, I think you're getting enough. I see no reason why you shouldn't be held to your own offer."

Mr. Fish rose without heat. Indeed, in some subtle and mournful way he seemed relieved.

"Oh, very well," he said. "Very well. I just put it up to you, that's all."

And then, after a moment's pause, he added the cabalistic words:

"Anyway, you can't say I didn't give you a sporting chance."

IV

On a bright May day Mr. Fish, like a modern Argonaut cruising for the golden fleece, or, perchance, sundry golden fleeces, took his departure on his selling campaign, and Mr. Keane settled down to wait.

On the whole, Mr. Keane was rather completely satisfied with himself. He had enlisted Mr. Fish in the good cause at no particular cost to himself, and he was about to put one over on Widdleby. He did not doubt Mr. Fish's ability to sell the bonds, all of which, save his own allotment and a few samples which Mr. Fish had taken with him, remained in the hands of Mr. Truax, to be forwarded to Mr. Fish as needed. If there was any further way in which Mr. Keane could safeguard himself or promote his chances of inheritance, he didn't see it, and, as has been intimated before, Mr. Keane was a shrewd man. All of which being so, there was nothing left but to spend the money, and this Mr. Keane proceeded to do.

Seated in the dingy little cubicle that as yet did duty as his office, with his feet comfortably propped on the rim of his desk, Mr. Keane no longer contemplated past glories, but future dreams. As soon as he got the money, which must now be within a couple of months at most, he would abandon cheap boarding-house life with celerity and install himself in a good downtown hotel. He would buy a new car. He would again cultivate some of those sylphs of the footlights, or their successors in office, whom he had known in better days, but for some time had virtuously eschewed. His name should once again be honored in the night life of the community. So much for his personal consolation.

But this was merely preliminary and incidental to his real purpose. What he really intended to do was to jazz up the real-estate market. Mr. Keane felt that the time was ripe for a revival of business. With sixty thousand dollars sagaciously apportioned in a few select options and liberal newspaper space, he was confident that the old town could be given the surprise of its history. If he couldn't double that sixty thousand in six months, it would be because there was something wrong with him. And Mr. Keane knew with a rock-ribbed and unblemished certainty that there was nothing wrong with him.

Occasionally he interrupted this flow of cheerful imagery by a visit to the office of the Lombard Land, Loan, and Investment Company. Each of these visits left him with a vague, rather unaccountable, sense of depression. Things were undoubtedly going well, if, indeed, they were going at all, on which latter point Mr. Keane was not wholly assured. The atmosphere of the place was not that which a man of push and vim like himself would naturally associate with successful business. Mr. Truax was faithful, with that sublime loyalty that borders on incompetence. He arrived duly at nine o'clock, read the morning papers and played pinocle with himself till noon, lunched frugally on crackers and milk, as becomes a trusted employee, looked out of the window till such time as the afternoon papers were available, and left promptly at five. President Bunker was not in evidence at all.

True, as Mr. Keane repeatedly reassured himself, this was not the actual scene of the company's labors. That scene attended the somewhat hazy peregrinations of Mr. Fish, who was swinging around a circle of magnificent dimensions and reporting progress regularly.

So far this progress had, however, been spacial rather than financial. He had sold some bonds, mainly on the instalment plan, but the money acquired had not done more than pay his own expenses and keep the home office open. Moreover, his twice-a-week letters were couched in a tone of buoyant optimism which Mr. Keane, knowing his friend, found unstimulating. And

Time, the exigent and untamed, swept relentlessly onward.

In the end, Mr. Keane, after sundry epistolary urgings to Mr. Fish to get busy and get a move on—communications which resulted merely in a flow of still more glittering optimism—felt obliged to write to Mr. Widdleby, inquiring as to a possible extension of time for demonstrating his possession of the magic fifteen thousand. Mr. Widdleby's reply, received in due time, was coldly to the effect that as trustee he could do nothing but follow the terms of the will.

Only two weeks remained of the crucial period when Mr. Fish's letters began quite suddenly to take on a tone of encouraging depression. He had, he explained with sorrow, hooked a big one. He would have the full amount of Mr. Keane's loan within the next ten days or maybe earlier. He asked that the bonds be sent on to him at once.

There followed a period of feverish anxiety for Mr. Keane, broken only by a brief and grief-stricken note from Mr. Fish to the effect that the deal was almost closed. Then came a letter, the meaning of which was some time in penetrating to the depths of Mr. Keane's consciousness.

My dear Bushrod:

It pains me to say this, but, having closed the pending deal, and having, accordingly, sixty thousand dollars in cash in my hands, I am constrained to reflect afresh on the wisdom of your deceased uncle in withholding his estate from you unless you could promptly demonstrate your fitness for its possession and management. We both know, Bushrod, that you cannot actually and in good faith pretend to the business capacity which your dear uncle had in mind. What would you do with sixty thousand? Or even with fifteen thousand? Lose it, of course. The common human weakness for unwise investment to which all are prone would beset you also. Some one not intended by your uncle would prove his real beneficiary. In view of these considerations, I cannot see my way clear to aid you in your attempt to circumvent his wishes. On mature reflection, I have decided to refer you to your legal remedies on your contract with the Lombard Land, Loan, and Investment Company for a loan, whatever those remedies may be. For my part, I shall endeavor, successfully I hope, to make commendable use of the considerable sum which a beneficent fortune has thus placed in my hands. I shall summer in Greenland; I will see you in Tahiti. Fare thee well. Your affectionate friend and well-wisher,

J. Whiffington Fish.

AS SOON AS HE GOT THE MONEY HE WOULD ABANDON CHEAP BOARDING-HOUSE LIFE WITH CELERITY AND INSTALL HIMSELF IN A GOOD DOWN-TOWN HOTEL

Mr. Keane read and reread this letter, at first with bewilderment, then with consternation, then with the sinking sensation in the pit of his stomach that meant despair. Too late, alas, he comprehended the tragically weak point in his strategy. He had allowed the competent Mr. Fish to get hold of the money first!

Yet the reaction, when it came, was worthy of a man of Mr. Keane's sagacity, resourcefulness, and dynamic energy. He remembered the twenty thousand dollars' worth of Lombard Land, Loan and Investment Company bonds reposing in his safe against just such an emergency. True, there was no time now to turn these into cash, or even to attempt such a feat. Barely forty-eight hours remained of the time within which he must present himself before Widdleby with the fifteen thousand dollars in his hands, and the railroad journey itself would take twelve hours.

"THERE YOU ARE!" ANNOUNCED MR. KEANE. "TWENTY THOUSAND IN GILT-EDGED BONDS. ALL MY OWN MONEY. THE SAVINGS OF FIFTEEN YEARS"

But why not—and here Mr. Keane's genius flamed into positive inspiration—why not present the bonds themselves to Widdleby? There was nothing suspicious

about the face of the bonds, nothing to show that he, Mr. Keane, had sponsored them or supplied the fresh air, sunlight, and gravel on which they reposed. Unless the name of Montrose Heights should, by accident, rouse unfortunate memories in Mr. Widdleby, there was a fair chance that he might bluff it through.

V

THE following morning found Mr. Keane, accordingly, *en route* for Towerville, the village home of his late uncle and the still present Mr. Widdleby. In the bottom of Mr. Keane's valise reposed the twenty thousand dollars' worth of bonds, neatly wrapped in brown manila paper, while in Mr. Keane's mind rose and faded successive images of the coming interview.

Widdleby might procrastinate, demur, question the value of the securities. Very well, he would flash the bank appraisal on him. If that did not suffice, he would tell him to write to Truax. He had already told Truax what to answer. Once he could browbeat or cajole Widdleby into surrendering his uncle's fortune, he would emulate the prudent example of Mr. Fish and vanish till the troubled waters subsided a bit. There is nothing, Mr. Keane reflected with mixed emotions, quite so effective for certain purposes as vanishing.

The principal street of Towerville approximated a business district for as much as three blocks before it ambled off again amid the pleasantly green lawns of village residences which widened into still more cheerful fields of ripening grain. On the chief corner of the business district stood the two-story brick building of the Towerville bank, and next to it, wedged in between the bank and a Ford garage, was the tiny frame office of David R. Widdleby, Esq., justice of the peace, notary public, real estate and insurance, and trustee under the will of the late William Keane, deceased. It was here that Mr. Keane found him, a small old man, fenced in by a mat of gray whiskers, perched behind the long deal table that bisected the apartment.

"Well, Mr. Widdleby," said Mr. Keane, setting his valise down on the deal table with some emphasis, "how are you? Glad to see me, I suppose?"

"I am always glad to see you, Bushrod," said the trustee.

"You look it!" agreed Mr. Keane derisively. "But you'd been a lot gladder to see me a week later when it would have been too late for me to get in under the will, wouldn't you? However, I'm here to claim my inheritance."

"The inheritance is ready for you, Bushrod," said the old man. "Every penny, all freshly and carefully invested so as to get the maximum of security. The income should be enough for your needs without inroads on the principal. But there was a condition, you know."

"I know it," said Mr. Keane with belligerent assurance. "I'm here to fulfil that condition. Otherwise I wouldn't be here."

He opened his valise, eying Mr. Widdleby the while much as the dentist does the patient while he selects the drill. He took out the manila package and undid it portentously.

"There you are!" announced Mr. Keane. "Twenty thousand in gilt-edged bonds. All my own money. The savings of fifteen years. I wish Uncle William was here to see 'em!"

Mr. Widdleby adjusted his spectacles over his rheumy eyes and fingered the bonds with evident surprise and a kind of lingering reluctance. He opened his mouth once or twice, but said nothing.

"Well," insisted Mr. Keane truculently, "ain't they all right? They're good bonds, ain't they? Have you got any kick coming?"

Mr. Widdleby cleared his throat and sadly admitted the truth.

"They're good bonds, all right," he said. "And I suppose they're yours. I've got no proof to the contrary. I've got a receipt here for you to sign. Sign it, and I'll turn over your uncle's estate to you."

Mr. Keane affixed his signature, prudently keeping the paper in his hands till Widdleby delivered the estate.

The old man rose, tottered to his safe in the rear of the room, and came back with a thick bundle of securities strapped with numerous rubber bands. These he snapped off, and spread the contents out on the table.

Then it was that Destiny, black-robed and awful, rose up and smote Mr. Keane beneath the fifth rib; that Stygian waters engulfed him; that Reason tottered on her throne, and relentless Nemesis clutched him by the hair. For there on the table before him, over and above his own contribution to the heap, lay sixty thousand dollars' worth of the bonds of the Lombard Land, Loan, and Investment Company!

The Wild Fawn*

A WIFE WHO BROUGHT GAY PARIS TO QUIET DIXIE LAND

By Mary Imlay Taylor

Author of "Who Pays?" "Children of Passion," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. L. LAMBDIN

WHEN William Carter returns from Europe with a charming French bride, his parents and his lame brother Daniel are considerably perturbed, the latter because he knows that William had been engaged to a town girl, Virginia Denbigh. But William's younger brother, Leigh, and his sister, Emily, are pleased. The Parisian wife, Fanchon, smokes cigarettes, does a ballet-dance at a church entertainment, meets a mysterious stranger named Corwin, and otherwise acts in an unconventional manner that shocks the old-fashioned community. Emily Carter, however, imitates her chic mannerisms, and Leigh worships her.

Fanchon resents the increasing coolness toward her that is exhibited not only by William's parents and Daniel, but by William himself, who seems to regret his marriage. Daniel's friendliness toward William's discarded *fiancée*, Virginia Denbigh, grows.

After Fanchon goes for a scandalous nocturnal horseback ride with Corwin, Leigh Carter is told by Bernstein, a motion-picture magnate who had tried unsuccessfully to engage Fanchon as an actress, that Corwin is ruining her good name. Enraged, the boy secures a pistol, challenges Corwin to a duel, and, when the latter boxes his ears, shoots him dead.

Colonel Denbigh, Virginia's grandfather, has not heard of the tragedy as he sits in his garden, late that same afternoon, waited on by his old colored servant, Plato.

XV

PLATO was removing the tray from the wicker table in the garden. The colonel, sitting under his horse-chestnut, observed the operation thoughtfully, smoking one of his big cigars.

"Yessuh, if yo' wants to buy a horse yo' can hab it cheap—dat's what Job Wills says. He was down to Miz Carter's dis mornin' talkin' to dat yaller girl, Mirandy. She done tole me. It am a good horse, col'nel, only got dat habit ob rollin' in de water."

"Pretty bad habit, Plato," observed the colonel. "Don't know as I'd like to have Miss Jenny rolled into the water."

"Dat's what happened to Miz Wilyum Carter, suh. She got rolled in de creek, an' she didn't get home till round one o'clock in de mornin'. Mirandy, she say Mist' Carter, he mos' throw a fit. Dat's de reason de livery stable done wanter sell dat horse. Job Wills, he say he's good horse, but he's de rollin'est horse he ever see—in a stream."

The colonel looked thoughtfully at the end of his cigar.

"Suppose I bought him, Plato? How about the rolling habit?"

"Ain't noffin' ter dat, suh, but to keep him out'n de water. I 'members ole Col'nel Colfax, suh, he done had dat horse, Pole Star, son ob de ole Black Star, suh, dat won all dem races. Mighty fine horse! De col'nel couldn't ride dat horse 'less dere was a drought. Sho! He sen' him down to de races every year. I reckon dat horse wins more races den any odder horse in dis country, yessuh! Yo' 'member old Judge Berrien?" Plato began to shake with reminiscent laughter. "Yessuh, dat ole man mighty mean to Col'nel Colfax. Yessuh, he comes up to dinner one night, an' he wants to ride home. He was allus borrowin' horses, an' he mighty slow 'bout returnin' 'em. Didn't never own no horse, but he was allus ridin'. De col'nel, he fuss 'bout a bit, den he calls out loud: 'Heah, yo', August!' August was de col'nel's groom. 'Yo', August, bring 'round Pole Star!' It

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had been rainin' in de mornin' an' de creek was all up to de bridge. De judge, he mighty pleased to ride Pole Star. He ain't been gone long befo' de col'nel, he say: 'August, yo' go down to de creek. I reckon de judge wants to return dat horse.' August, he went." Plato chuckled. "Pole Star, he was rollin' in dat creek, suh. August, he say he look 'round, don' see noffin', den he see de judge. Fo' de Lawd, suh, August, he declar' he done thought it was one ob dese yere doodle-bugs jus' up outen de groun' wid its legs all mud. De judge, he got in de water an' den he got in de mud. He say: 'Yo' take dat damned horse back to Col'nel Colfax, an' yo' tell him I ain't ridin' no porpuses!'"

The colonel laughed.

"Plato," he said, "I don't think I'll buy Job Wills's horse for Miss Jinny—not after that!"

Plato wagged his head.

"I done tole Mirandy dat I was sho' yo' won't buy no sech horse, suh." Then, as he finally took up the tray, he added: "Miss Jinny say to tell yo'-all she done ask Mist' Dan'l to stay to dinner, suh."

The colonel looked at his watch.

"I didn't know it was so late, Plato. Where's Miss Virginia?"

"She an' Mist' Dan'l in de parlor, suh. Miss Jinny, she been playin' fo' him. She step out an' tell me to tell yo' she ask him to dinner."

"You get out a bottle of the old Burgundy, Plato," said the colonel, and then added hastily: "Oh, no, I forgot—he doesn't drink anything but water. But, all the same, I like Mr. Daniel."

"Yessuh," said Plato. "Mighty good lawyer. I done heah Judge Jessup say he wouldn't wonder if Mist' Dan'l git to be Pres'dent United States hisself!"

The colonel laughed. Then he rose slowly to his full height, ran his fingers through his white hair, and started for the house. He was going in to see Daniel. He liked to talk to him. But, as he entered the wide, old hall, he heard the soft strains of Virginia's music. He stopped involuntarily to listen. She was playing an old tune, a love-song that the colonel loved. Virginia's grandmother had played it to him.

The old man stood listening, his eyes dreaming. Music is the most poignant of all reminders. The old hall was the same into which he had led his bride so many years ago. There was Grandfather Denbigh's clock in the corner, with the sun and the moon and the stars inlaid on its dial. There was the high chair in which one Governor Denbigh had sat. Things were shabby, the rug under his feet was frayed, but the dear familiarity of it all moved his heart.

He felt a lump in his throat, and tried in vain to swallow it. Without disturbing Virginia's playing, he moved to the door of the drawing-room and looked in.

It was nearly six o'clock in the evening, and the western sun shone warmly in the wide window behind the piano. It warmed and mellowed every object in the quaint, old-fashioned room. It touched on the dull gold frame of General Denbigh's portrait painted by Peale; it showed the tall harpsichord by the chimney-place, and the quaint, spindle-legged chairs with their shabby damask seats. The walls, mellowed by time, had the ruddy tints that form a background for old pictures and dull furniture.

The sunshine caught a corner of the mahogany table and glinted on a cabinet that held Captain Denbigh's corals, collected long ago in the South Seas; but it did more than that. It touched the golden hair on Virginia's head and illuminated the delicate beauty of her unconscious profile, her simple white dress, her slender wrists, and her white hands.

The colonel looked at her fondly. He thought her the loveliest girl in the State. He was on the point of entering softly, to draw up a chair and listen, when his eyes lighted on Daniel Carter.

Daniel, the lame brother of William, Daniel the unobtrusive, had not heard Colonel Denbigh. He sat with his profile also turned toward the door, leaning a little forward, one elbow on the lame knee, the other hand resting on the arm of his chair, and his pale face turned toward Virginia. Unconsciously she played, unconscious of an observer, and Daniel watched her. His dark eyes followed her movements as her delicate fingers swept the keys, and his own hand tightened on the arm of his chair until the knuckles whitened.

The colonel, watching him, had no longer any doubt that Daniel shared his admiration of Virginia. Something in the tense young face made the colonel turn quietly away, and walk soberly out on the front piazza.

"I reckon I'll smoke another cigar before dinner," he said to himself. "Poor boy,

DANIEL FOLLOWED HER MOVEMENTS AS HER DELICATE FINGERS SWEPT THE KEYS, AND HIS OWN HAND TIGHTENED ON THE ARM OF HIS CHAIR—

it's a pity he's lame. And, Jinny? Well, Jinny liked his brother."

The colonel lit his cigar and tramped rather heavily up and down the piazza.

Meanwhile, Virginia played on to the end of the piece; then she turned and looked over her shoulder. Meeting Daniel's eyes, she felt again that sudden shyness that she had felt before the church, and she laughed tremulously.

"Do you remember what old Dr. Samuel Johnson said about music, Dan?" she asked lightly. "I was thinking of it just now. He said that it excited no new ideas in his mind, and prevented him from contemplating his own."

"Very like him," said Daniel. "He never saw anything but his own ideas. I'll admit that it stops me from contemplating mine—I contemplate you instead."

Virginia laughed gayly this time.

"I shall play for you no more, then. Your ideas are worth too much. Lucas told me this morning, as we drove out from town, that Judge Jessup expects you to be 'Pres'dent United States, yessuh.'"

Daniel reddened.

"I wish the judge wouldn't make me appear such a fool. He's always talking; he's like your old Samuel Johnson."

"I think he knows what he's talking about, Dan," she replied gently, her serious eyes on his thin face. "You're working too hard; ambition's eating you up. Why, Dan, how thin you've grown!"

He smiled.

"I know it. The judge asked me, not long ago, if I had the pip."

They both laughed this time.

"Daniel," said Virginia irrelevantly, "I heard you were going into politics. Mr. Payson told me that you were standing for nomination for the Legislature."

He nodded, regarding her thoughtfully.

"It seems strange, Dan," she observed after a moment. "I never thought you cared for that sort of thing."

"What sort of thing, Virginia?"

—UNTIL THE KNUCKLES WHITENED. THE COLONEL, WATCHING HIM, HAD NO LONGER ANY DOUBT THAT DANIEL SHARED HIS ADMIRATION OF VIRGINIA

"Politics." She paused and smiled at him a little, her color rising. "I thought you were a kind of poet."

"You're thinking of Leigh; he's our infant genius. I'm only a stodgy lawyer."

Daniel leaned back in his chair, thinking. His eyes, traveling over Virginia's bright head, rested suddenly on a little portrait of a baby boy that hung above her piano in an oval frame. He recognized it with a grim tightening of the lips. It was an old picture of William at the tender age of three. His mother had given it to Virginia when she thought Virginia was to be William's wife. Doubtless it was an awkward thing to give back, and perhaps—Daniel did not finish the thought.

"I'm going into politics if I can," he said dryly. "I've got to have some interest, Virginia. A cripple can't sit still and think about being a cripple."

"I wish you wouldn't dwell so much on that," she rejoined quickly. "You think too much of it."

"But I don't speak of it often," he replied bitterly. "I try to hold my tongue."

"You scarcely ever speak of it, Daniel," she assured him gently. "I'm glad you spoke of it to me, though. I take it as a compliment."

"Why?"

He spoke sharply, his brows down. Virginia gave him a clear, sweet look that made him wince with misery—though she did not know it.

"Because I'm sure you wouldn't speak of it at all if you didn't believe that I felt for you; that I was your friend."

He drew a quick breath, pressing his lips together. There was a moment of silence; then he laughed discordantly.

"Oh, I know you! I remember how you took that maimed dog home when you were a child. All the others wanted it killed. I can see your eyes blaze now. How you fought for him! He had a right to live, you said. You always felt for the halt and the blind."

"That dog was a comfort," returned Virginia stoutly. "It wasn't any merit to be good to him. He was the best watch-dog we ever had."

"No one but you would have nursed that ugly, old, lame dog. It's your pity, Virginia—that's what I'm trading on—when I talk of my lameness."

Virginia rose suddenly from the piano and came over to his side. Before he knew what she was going to do, she had laid one of her firm young hands on his shoulder.

"Hush!" she said sternly. "You're getting embittered; you're losing the proportion of things, Daniel. If you talk like that I shall not pity you; I shall not even be your friend. Remember the gifts you've got, the brains God has given you. Aren't you ashamed of yourself, Daniel Carter?"

He did not answer for a moment. He sat quite still, looking up into her face soberly, aware of her hand on his shoulder.

"What am I to do if I can't help feeling that way, Virginia?" he asked at last in a low voice.

"You mustn't; I forbid you!" she said quickly, but she faltered.

She had come to him with the impulse of a sister; she had felt herself a sister to Daniel so long. There was no coquetry in it, only her sympathy for him. She knew how he had suffered. But now, suddenly, meeting his uplifted eyes, Virginia became self-conscious. She blushed, and her hand fell from his shoulder. With almost a feeling of panic she retraced her steps and sank back upon the piano-stool.

Daniel, leaning back in his chair as she had left him, passed his hand over his eyes. He was breathing with difficulty, like a man in pain, although he never suffered now from his injury. The physical pain was long past, and only the lameness remained; but for a moment he breathed like a man in anguish. Then, as his hand fell heavily on the arm of his chair, he raised his head and looked at her with haggard eyes.

"Don't do that again, Virginia," he said in a low voice. "I can't bear it!"

That was all he said, but Virginia, meeting his eyes, turned pale. She seemed to see suddenly, as if she looked into a mirror, all those days when she and William had been so happy and so foolish together, and Daniel—suffering from his hurt then—had looked on.

She knew now what he had suffered; and she had never once thought of him! It filled her with generous shame. What could she do? What could she say to him?

Then she heard his voice.

"Virginia, please play that last tune over again. I love it. It's so tranquil," he said gently.

She lifted her eyes to his in gratitude. He had known what to do, how to make it easy for her. He had not misjudged her; had not thought her a mere flirt.

She turned to the piano with an effort, winking back her tears; but she began to play, softly at first, with one little discord, then firmly, with a sure touch, as her heart grew more calm and she seemed to feel the reassurance of his friendship and understanding.

She was still playing when the telephone-bell rang sharply, its strident alarm shattering the last sweet cadences. Startled in spite of herself, Virginia rose hastily and went to the cabinet where the instrument stood.

"It's some one inquiring if you are here, Dan," she said in surprise. "Some one—your father, I think it is—wants to speak to you."

Daniel rose slowly—with unusual effort, she thought—and took the receiver from her hand. Virginia returned to the piano, busying herself there, turning over the leaves of her music, and trying not to listen; but she heard him ask a quick question. Then he uttered a sharp exclamation, and involuntarily she looked up.

Daniel hung up the receiver and turned.

"Oh, Dan, what is it? What has happened?" she cried.

His white lips moved soundlessly at first.

"It's my young brother," he said at last. "Leigh has shot and killed that man—Corwin, Caraffi's manager."

XVI

It was after dark, and the lights at the station-house were shining across a street still crowded with the curious and the idle, when Daniel finally reached the little cell where Leigh had been lodged since the shooting. He found the boy lying face downward on the bare cot in the corner, his head on his arms. Daniel had to touch his shoulder before he roused himself and looked up. His white, drawn face and his disheveled hair shocked his brother. He looked as if he had aged two years in five hours.

"I've come to help you, Leigh," said Daniel simply.

Leigh raised himself to a sitting posture, dropping his feet heavily to the floor. Daniel saw the traces of tears on his blurred face, but he pulled himself together, though his lips shook.

"Are they going to keep me here all night?" he asked sullenly.

Daniel sat down beside him on the cot.

"I'm afraid so, Leigh. Father offered bail, and so did Judge Jessup, but I don't think you'll get out to-night." He laid his hand kindly on his brother's shoulder. "Tell me about it."

Leigh's face worked convulsively, and he set his teeth hard on his lower lip. Daniel waited, his hand still on the boy's shoulder, his eyes immeasurably kind. He did not blame Leigh, and he was shocked at the change in him. It was a subtle thing, but it was there—that shot had killed Leigh's boyhood. Daniel saw it.

It seemed a long time before Leigh could speak.

"I—I never saw any one die before, Dan!" he said at last, swallowing hard.

"It's a mighty tragic thing, Leigh," agreed Daniel. "I never saw any one die like that myself."

"Oh, Lord—he looked so terrible!" cried Leigh, covering his face with his slender, shaking, boyish hands. "I'll—I'll never forget it!"

He fell to shuddering, in a state of collapse. Daniel patted his shoulder kindly, and waited. The boy would have to tell it his own way. It seemed a long time, though, and the dim light in the cell flared up and down.

Daniel looked about the narrow chamber; it was barren and dirty and exceedingly oppressive. He thought of his mother. This was her baby, her darling boy, the one she believed to be the coming genius of the family. It moved Daniel with infinite compassion and indignation.

Leigh lifted his haggard face from his hands and looked at his brother.

"Will they hang me, Dan?" he asked hoarsely.

"Not while I can lift a voice in your defense, Leigh; not while there's any power on earth that your brother can move to save you!" cried Daniel, his own voice deepening with emotion. "I'm your lawyer now, dear boy. Tell me about it. I've got to know. They say you went up to Corwin's room; that he was half drunk and unarmed, and you shot him in cold blood."

"I didn't know he was unarmed!" cried Leigh passionately. "You know I didn't, Dan. I had to shoot him. He was belying Fanchon; he dared to talk ill of Fanchon—"

"Leave Fanchon out!" cried Daniel. "Forget her for five minutes. Think of yourself, Leigh, of your own defense. Tell me about that shot."

"I tell you I had to shoot him!" Leigh's young face was distorted; a man's fury looked out of his young eyes. "I'd shoot him again this minute if he stood there"—he pointed a shaking finger at the wall opposite—"and said such things of Fanchon!"

"For Heaven's sake, leave Fanchon out! How did you do it, Leigh? I'm going to save you, I will save you, but you must tell me. Forget that I'm your brother, remember that I'm your lawyer. Tell me the whole story, Leigh."

Leigh, still choking with wrath, tried to command himself.

"I was going home this afternoon," he began hoarsely, "and Bernstein—you know, the movie man—he met me and told me to tell father about this—this man, Corwin."

Daniel suppressed an exclamation.

"He had no right to tell a boy like you."

"I had a right to hear, Dan," Leigh cried with passionate emphasis. "I'm the only one who cares for Fanchon—"

"Nonsense!" said Daniel roughly. "Where's William? You forget William."

Leigh set his face hard.

"Not even William! Didn't he sit and wait for her to come home that night? Do you think I'd do such a thing? Do you think any man would do such a thing if he loved a woman?"

Leigh was aflame now, and Daniel was silent. Like a flash arose the picture of William and Virginia. He had felt sure for a long time that William had repented in dust and ashes. The boy was right; no man who loved a woman would have sat there and waited that night.

"Corwin was insulting my sister-in-law," Leigh went on. "He was lying about her and blackening her. I wouldn't stand for it. I didn't wait to tell father. Father has never been just to her. I went home and got his pistol. I was going to hold it to Corwin's head and make him write a retraction—that's what I went there to do!"

Daniel shook his head mournfully. He recognized the familiar methods of the heroes of light fiction and the movies. Leigh had been acting a story, or, rather, he had started to act a story, and had failed. How in the world could he get this side of it—before a jury?

"What did Corwin say? What did he do when you got there, Leigh? What made you shoot an unarmed man?"

Leigh winced. His brother's tone, and the bald statement of an ugly fact, drove the truth home; but he set his teeth hard, scowling into space for a moment. The change in him moved Daniel again. Leigh had been a boy in the morning; to-night he had killed a man!

"I've told you," he said hoarsely. "I shot him for his lies about Fanchon. I—I had to shoot him, Dan. He wasn't fit to live!"

As Leigh spoke, he flung his arm out with a gesture of passionate fury. Daniel caught the arm and held it.

"Leigh, tell me the whole of it. I'm your lawyer—do you hear?"

Something in Daniel, his strength and his will, conquered, and the younger brother yielded to it. He drew a quick breath and straightened himself, feeling the clasp of Daniel's hand on his arm. Then he told his story—told it from the beginning to the end, his voice only breaking a little.

"I suppose he died right away," he said as he finished. "He didn't move any more. He deserved it—but, oh Lord, Dan! I don't want to see another man die because I shot him! Maybe I'm a coward, but I don't!"

"You're no coward," replied Daniel quietly. "It's a trying thing to see even a brute like that die, I reckon." He glanced at the boy's face and hesitated. "We're going to put up a big fight, Leigh."

Leigh's mouth twisted oddly; he was trying to keep his lips from shaking.

"I reckon I can stand for it, Dan. Mother—" He looked at his brother.

"You'll see her soon. You know how she loves you. We're all behind you, boy!"

Dan rose as he spoke. He hated to leave Leigh, but it was inevitable. He stood looking down at him, aware that Leigh winked back fresh tears at the thought of his mother. But the prisoner's thoughts shifted elsewhere. He looked up shyly, reluctantly.

"And Fanchon?"

Daniel's face hardened.

"She's locked in her room, Leigh, and won't see any of us. She treats us like enemies now. She hasn't even asked where you are."

Leigh's face went from red to white.

"She'd see me, though!" he cried with conviction. "You don't understand—you don't know her!"

Daniel said nothing to this, and there was a little pause, while his intolerable opinion of Fanchon seemed to thicken the very atmosphere the angry boy was breathing. Leigh's eyes flashed, and he bit his lip hard, but his elder brother held out his hand.

"I've got to go now."

There was a break in Daniel's voice. His other arm went around the prisoner's shoulders. Leigh broke down at the touch, and the brothers clung together.

Then Daniel tore himself away.

"We'll get you out of this, Leigh—God bless you!"

A moment more and Daniel got out into the corridor, where he stumbled blindly, dashing tears from his eyes.

The turnkey, locking the door of the cell, was startled.

"Anything the matter, sir?"

"Nothing!" said Daniel, swallowing the lump in his throat. "Nothing!"

He made his way hastily out of the station-house.

He did not stop even to confer with Judge Jessup. They had already covered most of the case in their previous talks; the morning would do for Judge Jessup. It was late, and Daniel wanted to reassure Mrs. Carter. He was horribly sorry for his mother. There seemed no way to comfort her. She was fairly stunned by the blow, and she could only keep on crying out that Leigh was a child, nothing but a child!

Daniel walked slowly at first. He did not want people to think that he was slinking home because his brother was in the station-house, charged with murder. The main street of the town was quiet enough at that hour, but it was evident that there was suppressed excitement. Little groups were gathered here and there along his way from the station-house, and men stopped talking to observe him covertly as he passed.

The story of Fanchon and Corwin had been magnified by this time until it bore no resemblance to its original form. Scandal

"I NEVER SAW ANY ONE DIE BEFORE, DAN," HE SAID AT LAST, SWALLOWING HARD. "IT'S A MIGHTY TRAGIC THING, LEIGH," AGREED DANIEL

is an ugly thing, fed usually by falsehood and growing like a dirty snowball rolled up in a coal-yard. Daniel perceived the curious faces, and was aware of the hush as he approached. Here and there a man took pains to speak to him in sign of open sympathy, but not often.

The long, pleasant street was rather dim under the arching trees, except where a lance of light shot across it from a street-lantern, or the headlight of a passing motor illuminated it broadly for a moment. The inn opposite his father's office was still brilliant for some belated diners, and he was aware that two or three of the waiters came to the door to stare at him as he went by.

In the room over their heads Corwin had been shot to death by his brother—only a few hours before. But he noticed that a Victrola was grinding out a rag-time record in the dining-room in spite of it.

He was glad that the next turn took him through the church lane into the old street that led to his father's house. Here only an occasional light shone in the houses, standing far apart and surrounded by their old-fashioned gardens, and there were few passers-by.

Daniel slackened his pace, partly because his lameness always troubled him when he was weary, and partly because he wanted to order his thoughts. He found it hard, for he was visited by a vision of Virginia standing in the open door of her home, holding his hand, her eyes full of sympathy —for Leigh!

At his own gate Daniel paused and looked up at the sky. The moon was just rising with an extraordinary beauty. The upper sky looked like a silver sea, pierced here and there by a brilliant star, and against it the dark hills rose in sharpened outlines, silhouetted against the ineffable sky. It had been so yesterday; it would be so to-morrow.

The unchangeable forces of nature seemed to reach Daniel with a new and bitter truth. Things would continue in spite of their little tragedy, even life would go on just the same—except for the coarse man lying dead with Leigh's bullet in his heart!

He was a long time finding his latch-key, he felt so reluctant to open the door. But, as the lock clicked, his mother appeared at the threshold of the drawing-room, and he saw that she was shaking all over.

"Oh, Danny!" In emotion she always reverted to the baby names of her children. "Oh, Danny, didn't you bring him home? Where is he?"

"I couldn't bring him to-night, mother." Daniel laid his hand kindly on her arm. "He's all right—I've just been with him."

She looked at him in horror, tears welling up in her eyes.

"He—he isn't in jail?" she whispered in a faint voice, clutching at Daniel's sleeve.

He put his arm around her.

"No, mother—he's in the station-house, that's all."

She uttered a cry, burying her face on his shoulder. Emily appeared behind her, in a state of dishevelment, her nose and eyes hopelessly red.

"Hush!" she warned them. "William hasn't stopped tramping up and down the back piazza. I think he's going crazy, and it's got into his legs first. Honest, I do, Dan!"

Daniel made no reply to this, partly because his father had just emerged from the library. Mr. Carter had been busy all the afternoon trying to get his son out on bail. He was worn out, and looked it. His iron-gray hair was standing up in a frill on the top of his head, and his cheeks looked flabby. He had taken off his coat and his boots, and stood there in his shirt-sleeves and stockinged feet.

"Did they take bail?" he asked grimly, looking at Dan over the top of the reading-glasses, which he had forgotten to take off.

Daniel shook his head, and, without another word, Mr. Carter turned and went back into the library.

"She's up there—locked in her room," Mrs. Carter whispered between sobs on her son's shoulder. "She won't even see William, and she's had her supper sent up. I don't see how she could eat it, after what she's done!" And she wept again, clinging to Daniel.

"She hasn't," said Emily, sniffing hard. "The tray's outside in the hall. She never unlocked her door."

"I wish it would choke her!" said Mrs. Carter, shaken with wrath. Then she drew back from her son's arm, wiping her eyes. "Oh, Dan, what's the good of your being a lawyer if you can't get that boy right out?"

Daniel sighed.

"Give us a little time, mother," he said gently. "You take her up to bed, Emily. She's worn out, and she'll only be ill."

"I don't care if I am ill!"

Mrs. Carter was desperate; she had eaten nothing, and her head ached from weeping. "I don't care for anything but my boy—my Leigh! To think of it—while I was making him a cherry pie, too!" she climaxed with more tears.

Emily caught hold of her, sobbing, too. She had eaten most of the pie, and it touched her to the quick to think of Leigh, pieless and in jail.

"Oh, mama, come up-stairs; it's going on eleven o'clock!"

Between them, Daniel and Emily got the weeping woman up-stairs. Daniel closed

the door on the scene as Emily made her sit down on the side of the bed and snuff lavender salts.

"Your nose is awfully red, mama," she said feelingly. "It 'll make your head ache worse. Mine aches dreadfully!"

Daniel went softly down to the library, aware of William's ceaseless march on the back porch. He found his father sitting quietly in the oldest cane-bottom chair, his stockinged feet thrust out in front of him and his hands in his pockets. He had never known his father to sit upright in a hard chair before.

Daniel went wearily over to his mother's rocker and sank into it, passing his hand over his eyes. He rather dreaded a long talk, now that the tension had snapped; but his father was not inclined to talk, and only asked a question.

"Think they'll take bail to-morrow?"

Daniel shook his head.

"I'm not sure. Judge Jessup thinks not. Corwin was unarmed and half tipsy. I've got to make the coroner see Leigh's part of it. Leigh has just told me. He didn't mean to shoot; he meant to make the man retract his slander of Fanchon."

Mr. Carter made an inarticulate sound under his breath, and Daniel went on.

"Then it seems that Corwin treated him like a kid—laughed at him, naturally enough. It wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been that the brute was drunk and slapped Leigh's face. Then the boy snatched out his pistol and fired. He was amazed when he found he had killed the man—that's all. It's plain enough. Manslaughter in the second degree, it ought to be, but I've got to prove it. You can't tell which way the coroner's jury will go. It depends on the witnesses to Corwin's state and—and character."

Mr. Carter wagged his head slowly and thoughtfully; his face was haggard and his eyes dim. There was a painful pause, and the clock chimed eleven.

"Mama's all broken up," he remarked at last, rising. "I reckon I'd better go up and quiet her." He moved slowly toward the door, carrying his boots. At the door he paused and looked back. "I haven't said anything to William," he remarked grimly, "not a word; but I reckon he'll have it out now with that—that little hussy up-stairs!"

Daniel made no reply to this, and Mr. Carter padded softly away. Presently a door shut heavily, and then Daniel heard Emily going to her room. She was crying audibly. It seemed to the listener that she sobbed loudest just outside Fanchon's door.

Daniel sat quite still. A great weariness had come over him. He had eaten nothing since breakfast, and the fast and the nervous strain had told. He sank back in his chair and almost ceased thinking, his eyes closed.

He was falling asleep from sheer exhaustion when he was startled by a new arrival. The door from the kitchen opened, and Miranda appeared, bearing a tray laden with viands and a smoking cup of tea. She set it down on the corner of the table.

"Yo' ain't had noffin', Mist' Dan," she said tearfully. "I knows! Plato, he been down heah to ask fo' you-all, an' he tole me yo' left without yo' dinner."

Daniel looked up into the sympathetic dark face and smiled.

"You're very kind, Miranda. I am hungry; I believe that's why I nearly fell asleep."

"Yessuh, I allus eats when I feels bad. Ain't noffin' like it, Mist' Dan. When my pa died I ate piece ob bacon an' two cabbages, I sho' did. I reckon dat's all dat kep' me from dyin' of grief. I sho' did feel po'erful bad!"

Daniel drew up a chair.

"I'll take your prescription, Miranda," he said gratefully.

Miranda beamed tearfully.

"Dat's right, Mist' Dan! Dere ain't any cabbage dere, but dere's sparrowgrass—an' dat's mos' as good!"

XVII

Daniel was up the next morning at six o'clock and had breakfasted before the other members of the distracted family appeared. The only one he saw was his brother. William had stopped his weary tramp on the piazza at daybreak, and, coming into the library, had thrown himself on the lounge. He lay there when Daniel came down, sleeping the heavy sleep of physical exhaustion. One arm trailed limply toward the floor, the other was thrown across his haggard face, hiding it from view.

Daniel stopped a moment and stood looking at him, touched with pity. He remembered him as he had brought his bride up from the station-gates that first night, so confident in his happiness. It seemed so long ago! The brothers had been very

sympathetic as boys, but Daniel's accident and his subsequent illness, delaying his college course and putting everything out of joint, had rather separated them.

He felt drawn toward the sufferer now. If William had sinned against the finer ethics of society, if he had slighted a noble girl to marry a showy flirt, he was paying the price; and Daniel felt it. He turned away from the stricken figure on the lounge with a poignant feeling of commiseration. Things like this could never be forgotten. No patching-up would hide the scar in William's heart, or make him regard his wife in the same light again.

Daniel did not rouse him. He went out silently, bent on doing his utmost for Leigh. Leigh was Fanchon's victim as surely as William had been.

And Corwin? Daniel, who had scarcely seen the man until he saw him lying dead at the coroner's, wondered in what measure Fanchon was responsible for his death, too.

There were women like that, he reflected, and there were others like—Virginia!

The very thought of her brought him a feeling of happiness, of reassurance. The world could not be such a bad place, after all, when there were women like Virginia in it. Even in the darkness of his present perplexity, Daniel smiled tenderly. No matter what else happened, Virginia would not fail him. He felt the touch of her hand on his and heard her voice again, her sympathy for Leigh. And she had said nothing against Fanchon. Not by a word or a glance had she accused Fanchon.

But he heard it elsewhere. Judge Jessup could not control himself, and Mr. Payson, coming into Jessup's office to express sympathy for Leigh and the Carters, did not restrain himself at all. He thought that William should have made his wife behave before this. This, in his opinion, was the natural sequence to that shocking fandango at the church musicale.

Daniel, meanwhile, labored for Leigh. In spite of his best efforts, his brother was held for the grand jury without bail. The fact that Leigh had gone to Corwin's room, carrying a pistol with him, and had there shot an unarmed man, went against him, despite his youth and his family connections. Daniel had only a few moments' talk with him before he was removed to the county jail.

Judge Jessup, coming out from the inquest, and mopping his head, used strong language.

"Can't be for anything but manslaughter, anyway," he growled fiercely.

Seeing Mr. Carter sitting in a crumpled heap in the corner of his office, the judge got a flat, black bottle from under his desk, poured something into a glass, and made Johnson Carter swallow it.

"That 'll get you on your feet, John-

son," he said gruffly. "We give it to racehorses down in Kentucky. You can call it arnica, if you're afraid of taking to drink."

Then, while Mr. Carter tried to rally his scattered forces, he moved over to Daniel, who was standing by the window observing the motor that was carrying Leigh down to the jail.

"Dan," said he, lowering his deep bass, "where's that woman?"

Daniel started.

"Up at the house, I reckon," he said. "She was locked in her room this morning."

"Who's going to get her story out of her?" asked the judge. "William?"

Daniel stared out of the window in silence.

"I'M GOING HOME NOW. CAN YOU KEEP FATHER HERE?" THE JUDGE NODDED AND THEY BOTH GLANCED AT THE MAN SITTING IN THE BIG SWIVEL CHAIR

"That indictment has got to be either murder or manslaughter. It depends on the story. Who's going to get it? I reckon William can."

"I'll see," said Daniel quietly. "I'm going up home now. Can you"—he hesitated—"can you keep father here?"

The judge nodded. They both glanced at the man sitting in the judge's big swivel chair. Mr. Carter was leaning back dejectedly, with both hands clenched on the arms of the chair, and his head bent forward. He was staring fixedly at the blotting-paper on the judge's desk, his mouth hanging open. Daniel picked up his hat and quietly left the room.

He did not walk home. He was worn out and he hailed a taxi. He had already telephoned the verdict of the coroner's jury to his mother, and he knew they were, in a measure, prepared for the worst; but his heart sank as he ascended the familiar old steps. Even the rose-bush beside the door seemed to bewail the thought of the youngest boy, the mother's pet, being in jail.

Emily opened the door for him. Her nose was still red, and she was trying vainly to wink back her tears.

"Mama's gone to bed," she announced chokingly. "She's cried herself sick. And William's gone out—I don't know where he's gone. Mama's afraid he'll—he'll drown himself!"

"He came down to Judge Jessup's office to hear about Leigh, and he's gone over to the Payson Building," said Daniel dryly. "You go and tell mother he's all right.

And — listen, Emily — I've got to see Fanchon. Will you please ask her to come down-stairs?"

"Ask Fanchon to come down-stairs? Me?" Emily crumpled. "I guess I won't!"

"I've got to see her," repeated Daniel. He drew a pad from his pocket, wrote a line on it, and folded it. "You take that up, Emmy."

Emily backed.

"No!"

"Don't you want to save Leigh?" asked Daniel sharply. "Yes? Then you take that up and stick it under her door and knock. She'll read it."

"She won't! She hasn't eaten anything. I think she's going to starve herself to death."

"Nonsense! You do as I say."

Emily still backed. Then, catching his eye, she wavered, took the paper, and ran, sobbing, up-stairs.

Daniel waited impatiently, walking up and down the hall. He had never been able to form a clear idea of Fanchon. He could not even conjecture what she would do. He had never believed in her, he did not believe in her now, and he felt the deepest resentment toward her for having brought his young brother to this.

He was still walking up and down the hall when Emily called to him from the staircase in a watery stage whisper:

"She says, come up to her room."

Reluctantly Daniel went up-stairs. Emily was hanging over the banisters at the top.

"She's in the little front room over the door," she whispered, sniffing. "I think she's going away; I saw her trunks open."

Daniel nodded and made his way to the small room over the front door, which his mother had hastily converted into a boudoir for the bride. He remembered the night when Leigh had helped her put a fresh polish on the floor before they laid the new rug. These little things seemed to crowd into his mind, bringing back Leigh's boyish face in the dim cell, his terror of the dead Corwin.

He knocked gently at the closed door.

"Come in," said Fanchon's voice.

Daniel entered and stood still.

The little room, finished in pink and white, was in wild disorder. A small hat-box trunk stood open, a traveling-bag gaped, half-packed, and innumerable articles, large and small, were scattered on the chairs and on the floor. Stretched on a lounge, in front of the window, lay Fanchon. Her head was on her arms, and her soft hair, falling loose over her shoulders, hid her face. She wore some loose black robe which made her small figure look even smaller and more childish than usual. There was something in her very attitude broken and forlorn, and Daniel felt his first touch of actual pity for her as she rose on her elbow and lifted her haggard face from her arm. Her eyes were hollow, and even her lips were white. No touch of rouge concealed the havoc of a sleepless night and a day of anguish.

Her expression so amazed Daniel that he stood still, just inside the door, looking at her. Fanchon straightened up, dropping her feet to the floor, and holding herself erect in her place by gripping the edge of the lounge with nervous, shaking fingers.

"Is—is Leigh in jail?" she asked faintly, her dark eyes fixed on Daniel's face.

He nodded.

"Held for the grand jury. Haven't they told you?"

"No one tells me anything; no one speaks to me! I'm going away; I'm packing up. But Leigh? *Mon Dieu!* I'm human, I want to know about Leigh!"

"I came here to ask you to help me save Leigh," said Daniel quietly. "It's got to be either murder or manslaughter. It depends on you, Fanchon."

"On me?" She drew a long breath, her eyes darkening with emotion. "*Que voulez vous?* What can I do?"

"Tell us the whole story, Fanchon. Tell us about Corwin. I've no doubt at all that he deserved to be shot—but not by Leigh."

Fanchon drew in her breath, setting her small, white teeth hard on her under lip. She did not look toward Daniel, but away into a corner of the room, as if she saw things unseen and terrible. A deep blush mounted suddenly and painfully to her forehead. Daniel waited patiently, leaning against the door. At last she turned and raised her eyes pitifully to his.

"Why must I tell?" she asked brokenly, twisting her handkerchief about with feverish fingers, tears coming suddenly and running down her cheeks.

"Leigh shot an unarmed man in his own room," replied Daniel dryly. "We've got to show cause why the man should have been shot. Corwin has blackened you—yes, but that was William's business, and there's nothing—forgive me, Fanchon, but

there's nothing to show that Corwin didn't speak the truth, except what you yourself can tell us."

"William believes what he said, then!" she cried hoarsely. "That's why he hasn't spoken to me or looked at me since—since Corwin was shot! He believes it—you all believe it!"

Daniel's face hardened. He saw a storm coming, and he despised the way she ranted.

"I'm asking you to tell us the truth."

She half rose, panting.

"You ask it because—because you believe what he said!"

"I ask it—to save Leigh."

She sank back, weak and shaken. Then she dashed the tears from her eyes.

"I'll do anything for Leigh! He's the only one who believed in me."

"He believed in you enough to put his life in jeopardy," Daniel replied grimly. "If you want to help him, you'll have to tell me the whole story, Fanchon."

She worked at her handkerchief again, winking back her tears, and he had a chance to see how her face had hollowed and how weak she looked. He remembered that Emily said she had refused food, and it occurred to him that they were cruel to her; that she resented their cruelty. But, all the while, he saw that boyish face in the dingy light of the cell, and his heart grew hot within him. He wouldn't spare her.

"You want to know about Corwin?"

Her voice was very low. Daniel assented, and she seemed to struggle with herself.

"*Dieu!*" she cried softly.

"As soon as you can, please," said Daniel, watching her, wondering if now, under this stress and pain, she would tell the truth. He doubted it.

"Do you remember what I told you in the library that day?" she asked abruptly. "About my father and my mother and the convent?"

"Yes."

"It was a lie," said Fanchon. "It was the same lie that I told William."

Daniel looked at her grimly, unsparingly.

"I hope you're going to tell me the truth now," he said sternly.

She dragged some soft pillows toward her and leaned her elbows on them, half hiding her face in her hands, not looking at him at all.

"Sit down," she said in a low voice. "I'll tell you the whole story from the beginning. It was true that my father was French, and that he was a vine-grower and wine-maker on a ranch in California, and that my mother, the Irish girl, died there. My father did take me to Paris, but he didn't put me in a convent school. He left me with his sister, a milliner in one of the little back streets. They were alike, those two, of an ugliness inside and out. For a while he paid for me, and then he didn't. I think he drank himself to death. My aunt brought me up. She wasn't a good woman, and she was greedy for money. I was pretty, and she had me taught to dance and sing. I was dancing when Aristide Corwin saw me. He was managing a vaudeville company in London then. He took a fancy to me."

Fanchon stopped a moment, pressing her handkerchief against her lips. Then she went on, speaking rapidly and recklessly.

"You think it was the old story? *Mais non,* it wasn't! I was only fifteen, and I hated him. I hated his good looks and his showy dress and his coarse voice—but I was a beggar and I was a child, *enfant de Bohème.* My aunt told him he could have me for a price. He must marry me—marry in Paris, too. You know French law? And he was to pay her—about three thousand dollars in your money. She sold me. I was her niece, and she made him marry me. She made me his slave good and fast, for she made me his wife!"

"You mean that you were Corwin's wife, and you never told my brother?" Daniel exclaimed harshly, leaning forward to look at her.

She turned, her white, small face shadowed by her wild hair, her eyes smoldering.

"I didn't tell your brother? *Non!* I didn't tell. Now, listen—I'll tell you all, and you can tell your brother," she added bitterly. "I was fifteen, and I was small for my years. Corwin trained me. He saw what I could do, and he trained me like a spaniel. For what? To support him, *mon ami!* I danced and I sang for four years to support a man who never worked. He lived on me. Sometimes I was ill, sometimes I was broken with grief and shame, but it made no difference—he lived on what I made. I was worth more than the money he had paid—a hundred times over! When he was drunk he beat me. I've had black welts on my shoulders that I had to hide when I danced. I was sixteen then, and afraid, deadly afraid of him. I was even afraid to run away. Then I grew older,

"YOU REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT MY FATHER AND MOTHER AND THE CONVENT? IT WAS A LIE," SAID FANCHON. "IT WAS THE SAME LIE I TOLD WILLIAM"

and I tried to get a divorce in Paris, but I couldn't. I tried in London, and failed again. He saw to that. Then I knew I must wait. I was American; I was born here. I waited. By and by Aristide brought me to New York and put me in a company to tour the Western States. That was luck—great luck—for he was ill. He was strong as an ox, but he had appendicitis, and had to go to a hospital in New York. I went to California. I was just twenty-one. I told William I was eighteen, but I'm twenty-

four. In California I got a divorce for cruelty. I got my freedom. From a child I had been in the hands of a brute; suddenly I was free!" She looked up again, pressing her hands against her breast. "*Mon Dieu*, I can't tell you what I felt!"

She ceased speaking and sank down again on her elbows. This time she tore at the cushions with her restless fingers.

"Go on," said Daniel ruthlessly. "This doesn't bring us to Leigh."

She looked around at him, her face twisting oddly to keep back her tears.

"I'll tell you. I was divorced—it was legal in California, though Aristide swore it wasn't. He came at me like a wild beast. He tried to get the decree set aside. He threatened; he swore vengeance. Then I told him that I'd die before I went back to him. I meant it, and he knew it. I remember when we were first married, and I was only fifteen, I used to go about looking for places to throw myself into the Seine; but I never could, it was so dirty!" She shuddered. "He vowed he'd never let me go, and he never has. He followed me about and published false stories about me. Once he got me arrested for theft. I was innocent. He couldn't prove it, and they let me go. He tried and tried to get me back, to take away my work and starve me into coming back. Then, when he saw that I wouldn't come back, he was terrible. I married William. No, not in Paris! We were married in New York when the ship docked. You didn't know that, *n'est-ce-pas?* But what would you? I couldn't be married in Paris. I couldn't tell my story; I wouldn't tell it." She raised tortured eyes to Daniel's face. "I loved William; I couldn't risk it. We were married, and Corwin heard of it. He wrote me a letter then. He said he'd ruin me; he'd see to it that my husband got a divorce; he'd fix me—and he's done it!"

"Have you got that letter?" Daniel asked quickly, a flash in his dark eyes. "Where is it?"

"I'll give it to you," she said brokenly. "It's all true, Dan, this time—all true! You can have his letter. That night—the ride—your father thinks I disgraced you all. I went alone. Corwin rode after me, and I did go back with him. I ate dinner with him. I begged him not to ruin me; not to publish lies about me. I begged and begged. I had no money. He had always taken every cent I earned, and the little I got after the divorce I'd paid out for clothes—all but a trifle. I offered that, and he laughed at me. He boasted that he had me; that no other man would keep me. He said I'd be turned out of a respectable family when he got done with me—and then I would come back to him." She turned with a pitiful gesture. "I could do nothing to stop his mouth. Who would speak for me? Whoever speaks for a woman when a man like that blackmails her? You—you all hated me!"

Daniel, who had risen, stood looking at her, his face brooding.

"On my soul, Fanchon, I pity you!" he said simply. "But why—why, in Heaven's name, didn't you tell William the truth?"

She shivered, cowering away from him.

"I—I've always been a liar," she replied with white lips. "I was brought up to lie. And"—she rose and faced him—"I couldn't give him up. He was good, he loved me—*mon Dieu!*". She covered her face with her shaking hands. "And I've ruined his brother, the boy who liked me so well!"

Daniel pitied her, pitied her profoundly. Her story had appealed to the lawyer in him, he had been watching and listening for some word that he could use to save Leigh; but now something in her cry of pain, in her small, black-clad figure, her wildly lovely face, touched him.

"Fanchon," he said gently, "please give me that letter."

She lifted her head. Her tear-stained eyes met his, searched his, read a touch of friendliness in them, and her lips shook.

"I'll get it," she said.

She took a step forward, she seemed about to go into her bedroom, but suddenly she swayed, her head fell forward, and she stretched out both her hands helplessly, gropingly.

"It's all black!" she gasped. "I can't see!"

Daniel caught her barely in time, for she had fainted in his arms.

XVIII

FANCHON was very ill that night. Her stormy nature had plunged into an eclipse, and she lay white and shivering, staring at the ceiling, her half-packed trunks around her. She would not let even Emily come near her—only Miranda and the doctor, whom Daniel had summoned hastily. She

had not tasted food since Leigh's shot, and she was worn out.

Dr. Barbour, prescribing food and quiet, made some gruff remarks to Mr. Carter.

"No use killing her," he said dryly. "Might as well keep her alive, as long as Corwin's dead."

William did not come home at all, but spent the night in his office. Daniel went down there on his way to court in the morning. The elevator boy, a young mulatto, showed the whites of his eyes as he took him up.

"He ain't been down fo' noffin' to eat," he remarked. "Sen' me fo' bottle of whisky, but ain't eat noffin'."

Daniel frowned. He had had his suspicions of the whisky before, though his father had never told him of his own surmises. He limped quickly over to William's door, found it unlocked, and walked in.

The shades were still drawn and the electric lights switched on. William lay stretched on an old couch in the corner, his arms under his head. At first Daniel thought he was drunk, but as their eyes met he saw that William was terribly sober. He had a look in his eyes that gave his brother a shock. It was the look of a man who coveted death.

The couch was one of those high-backed affairs with a low arm at each end. Daniel sat down on the arm at William's feet.

"Fanchon's ill," he said quietly. "You'd better go home and see her, William."

William looked at him intently for a moment, then spoke in a voice so changed that it was startling.

"I don't want to see her," he said coolly. "I don't care if I never see her again."

"She's your wife, all the same," Daniel remarked dryly, "and she's going to help me save Leigh."

"I'm done with her," William retorted.

"You can't say that—you won't say it—if she sacrifices herself for us," returned Daniel, watching him.

"I'm done with her," William repeated, and closed his eyes, evidently considering that he had closed the subject.

Daniel observed him a moment in silence. He was perfectly aware that argument was useless, and he was not altogether prepared to argue for Fanchon. His brother—who looked ill and wretched—was apparently falling asleep, so Daniel went to the table, confiscated a half-empty bottle of whisky, and switched off the lights. He drew up the shades and opened all the windows, and the dead atmosphere of the room was revivified with sunshine and air.

Daniel looked at William again, but there was no movement or sound from him, so the lame brother left the room, closing the door softly behind him. He had a strange feeling as if he had closed it upon a corpse, as if the brother he had known had passed away, and into this shell that was left behind some other spirit had entered. The thought reminded Daniel of the seven devils of the Bible. Certainly the change in William was for the worse.

But he had no time to think of William. His business took him to Judge Jessup's office, and from there to the court-house, where a panel of the grand jury had been summoned. As he made his way toward Jessup's office he encountered a crowd on the main street, and saw a hearse proceeding toward the station, carrying a plain pine-wood box. The inquest being over, Corwin's body was to be shipped to New York.

Daniel had to wait for the hearse to pass, aware of the curious glances that came his way. A picture rose before his mind of a little girl of fifteen being married to a coarse brute more than twice her age, who wanted her to earn his living for him. If he could only get that picture clean-cut before a jury!

Daniel had that delicate keenness of perception that makes great orators feel their audiences. He knew intuitively the thing that touched the heart, he had latent in him a gift for playing on the feelings of the masses, as some musicians have in them a singular power to draw more music from the chords of their instruments than other men. He had perceived it, too, in Fanchon, if he could only mold her to her rôle. He was trying to marshal his thoughts, to see a way to bring Fanchon before the jury without losing the effect of her evidence, when he reached Jessup's office.

The judge, who was waiting to go before the grand jury, was sitting in his swivel chair in his shirt-sleeves, with his hat on. He scarcely glanced up when Daniel entered, for he was listening to a visitor. Samuel Bernstein sat in the prisoner's dock—as Daniel called the stiff chair by the window where the judge seated his doubtful clients and penalized them with a savage, unwavering observation. He was observing Bernstein now over the tops of his glasses, exactly as he would have observed a gipsy-

moth. To his mind, Bernstein had been nearly as disastrous.

The motion-picture producer seemed to be suffering extremely from the heat. He had his hat off, and was mopping beads of perspiration from his forehead.

"Say, judge, I never thought about a kid like that usin' shootin'-irons," he said mournfully. "But I told him the truth—every bit of it! I'll go on the stand an' swear to it. You see, it was this way—I couldn't get the thing to 'em, an' I thought they oughter know."

The judge glared at him in silence, then swung his swivel chair around a little and looked over the papers on his desk.

"Meddling, Mr. Bernstein; nothing at all but meddling in other people's business," he retorted shortly. "If I had my way there'd be a new law in this State. I'd send nosey people to the workhouse, sir. I'd give 'em something to do. Here's your deposition. Read it over. You'll be called again, some time this afternoon."

"Now, looka here, judge, I ain't a meddler," objected Bernstein plaintively. "That man Corwin was blackmailin' the lady, and I wanted to stop him. I'm conferring a favor now, sir, goin' on the stand. Anybody who knows Sam Bernstein knows he ain't goin' to lie. I've got a reputation. This trial, sir, with me on the stand—" He paused regretfully. "Say, it would make just about three thousand feet of great stuff—and they won't let me bring in my camera-men!"

"Confound your camera-men!" said the judge, and rose, slamming down the top of his desk. "Dan, you here? We've got to go over to the court-house now. You come over in half an hour, Bernstein. I reckon it isn't more than one thousand feet of film to the square," he added with a sudden, irresistible twinkle.

"IF I HAD MY WAY THERE'D BE A NEW LAW IN THIS STATE. I'D SEND NOSEY PEOPLE TO THE WORKHOUSE, SIR"

Even Bernstein laughed.

The judge, linking his arm in Daniel's, kept pace with the younger man as they walked up the main street toward the old court-house. It was a little past ten o'clock now, and the street was full. Daniel noticed that the tide was flowing toward the court-house. His cheeks reddened angrily under the curious glances of men and women in the crowd.

There had been a strong element of sympathy for Corwin. He had been free-handed, and had made himself at home in local sporting circles. Daniel, with his fine perception of the trend of human feeling, knew that the sympathy was not all on their side. Fanchon's famous dance at the church musicale, and her frequent appearances with the man himself, had all worked against her. It did not seem quite fair to lay all the blame on Corwin.

If William had shot him, the thing would have been understood. Leigh's act was subject to terrible misinterpretations. It seemed as if the Carter family had employed a boy to do the shooting in the hope of getting off scot-free. To half the men on the street it looked like a case of sheer cowardice on the husband's part, and Daniel knew it. He had that kind of sensitiveness—wrought up by much solitary suffering and introspective thought—that made this consciousness of the possible charge of cowardice against them all a kind of torture. He was very white, and his eyes sparkled dangerously.

"He looks as if he might kill a man, lame as he is," one of the bystanders whispered, and Daniel heard it.

"I don't know that we can get an indictment for manslaughter, Dan," said the judge in his ear. "Seems to me it 'll be murder, but there's no telling with that jury."

Daniel, thinking of Leigh's boyish face and girlish eyes, set his teeth very hard. At that moment he had no feeling of pity for Fanchon.

"When a man gets married the way William did," remarked the judge, "it's mighty like putting your hand into a grab-bag at a church fair. You're not going to get anything useful out of it."

Daniel said nothing.

They crossed the square and ascended the court-house steps half an hour before the time set for the grand jury.

Meanwhile, Mr. Carter came down to Judge Jessup's office and collapsed there. He had intended to go on to the court-house, but he could not. He sat down limply in the judge's chair with one hand on the telephone, waiting to be called.

He had passed a terrible night. Mrs. Carter had indulged in the only fit of hysterics she had ever had in her life, and her husband had thought, at first, that it was apoplexy. He had summoned Dr. Barbour, rousing the good man from his bed, and had caught a lecture for it.

"Never seen a woman in hysterics before?" the doctor asked fiercely. "Put her feet in hot mustard water. I reckon that when you see a real fit you'll turn in the fire-alarm!"

But he was unable to eradicate Mr. Carter's first impressions. Thinking it over now, he shook his head.

"Never saw her like that in her life before," he reflected. "Had seven children and lost three—and never threw a fit before! If Leigh—"

He stopped at that; he couldn't go any further. He rose and pulled off his coat and unbuttoned his collar. He felt that the heat—it was only an ordinary summer day—was intolerably oppressive. Then he took down the telephone receiver absently, and had to assure central that he didn't want anything.

"Knocked it off by accident," he explained mendaciously.

But the incident embarrassed him, and he collapsed into the chair again and fanned himself with his hat. Then the telephone-bell rang sharply in his ear, and he seized the receiver. A tremulous young voice called:

"Is Judge Jessup there?"

"No, the judge has gone over to the court-house. This is Mr. Carter—Johnson Carter."

"Oh, papa!" It was Emily, and he could almost feel her tears through the instrument. "Mama thought you might be at the judge's office. Got any news about Leigh?"

"Not yet!" Mr. Carter was hoarse, but he cleared his throat. "How's mama?"

"She's all right; she's just taken peppermint tea. Papa, I've got something to tell you."

Her voice seemed to die away, but he heard her blowing her nose.

"What is it, Emmy?"

"F-Fanchon's going—she's got the expressman here for her trunks."

"Glad of it!" said Mr. Carter dryly. "If she wants a taxi, I'll send it."

"Oh, papa!"

"Yes?"

"Mama says she'll die if she doesn't know about Leigh soon!"

"I can't help it, I—say, I see the judge and Dan coming—I'll call you up again in a minute!"

"NEVER SEEN A WOMAN IN HYSTERICS BEFORE?" THE DOCTOR ASKED FIERCELY. "I RECKON WHEN YOU SEE A REAL FIT YOU'LL TURN IN THE FIRE-ALARM"

He hung up the receiver and rushed to the door. Judge Jessup and his son came in soberly. The judge threw his hat down on the table and said nothing.

"Indicted for murder—second degree, father," said Daniel, averting his eyes.

Mr. Carter tottered to a chair and covered his face with his hands. In the silence of the little office they heard the first shrill cry of a newsboy.

"Extry! Extry! Leigh Carter indicted for murder! Extry!"

Mr. Carter groaned aloud. Then he remembered.

"Dan, Emmy phoned me a few minutes ago. That—that woman's leaving the house—bag and baggage. If you want to ask her anything—"

Judge Jessup interrupted with a roar.

"Get a taxi, Dan! Catch her, don't let her go! I'll subpena her, if necessary. Stop her!"

Daniel, who had turned a startled face on his father, nodded at the judge.

"Phone mother, father," he said quietly. "It isn't fair to keep her waiting even ten minutes. I'll go out there at once."

As he spoke, he whistled for a passing taxi. He heard his father's shaking voice at the phone as he went out.

The cab went off at top speed, and Daniel sank back in the corner, resting his head against the stiff old cushion. He felt a great weariness, a sensation of defeat and despair. He had fought hard for an indictment for manslaughter, but had succeeded in getting a second degree of murder only by the most strenuous effort and the appeal of Leigh's obvious youth. Daniel knew that they had a hard fight before them, and he doubted the boy's nerve. The whole thing was hideous to him.

He looked out with dull eyes, aware of the swift passing of the street corners. The taxi swung into the church lane with a shriek of its warning horn, and Daniel looked around at the church door, thinking of Virginia.

The next moment he saw her. The old wagonette and the two fat horses appeared, progressing slowly toward town. Colonel Denbigh and his granddaughter were sitting in the vehicle, facing each other on the two long seats.

Virginia saw Daniel and waved to him. He knew that they had the news, for the colonel was reading an extra, and Virginia's face was full of it. She seemed to fling him a message of sympathy and courage and faith. Daniel felt it. It roused him. He felt suddenly the impulse of the fighter, and he shut his teeth on it. He must win, he would win!

He was still feeling it when the taxi stopped abruptly at the Carter gate and the chauffeur got down to collect his fare. Daniel paid it absently, aware that the man was staring at the figure that he saw on the piazza.

In the midst of a pile of luggage stood Fanchon. She was dressed for the street, and wore a hat and a fashionable veil that made a singular figure on the side of her pale cheek, like the tail of a black dragon. She was leaning against a trunk that stood on end, her dark eyes fixed gloomily on her approaching brother-in-law.

"What's this, Fanchon?" he asked quickly. "You're not going to fail me?"

She shook her head.

"I couldn't stay here! You can tell William that he can come home. I'm going over to a boarding-house on the turnpike. I found it once—"

She blushed suddenly and pitifully, and Daniel knew she referred to her ride. He drew a breath of relief.

"I'm sorry," he began, half ashamed that she felt driven from the house, and painfully remembering William.

She caught his sleeve, her hand shaking.

"Daniel, tell me—the indictment?"

"Murder in the second degree."

She reeled back, clutching at the trunk, her face deathly and her fawnlike eyes fixed on his.

"What—what's the penalty?"

"In this State, imprisonment—five to eighteen years."

"Five to eighteen years—in prison—for—for Leigh!" she repeated slowly, gasping.

She sank down, leaning on the trunk, and trembling, her eyes still fixed on Daniel's white, set, unpitying face.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she cried at last, and burst into passionate tears.

(*To be continued in the January number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

AN EGYPTIAN RIDDLE

THIS is what I heard on a Nile lagoon,
Gazing at the mountains—Mountains of the Moon:

"I am the stay-at-home who travels far,
Both friend and foe to Pharaoh and sirdar.

"I am the old, the middle-aged, the young;
Owning no land, through me all grain has sprung.

"I seek the north, yet do not leave the south;
Wisdom has issued from my speechless mouth.

"I have no ears, yet am not viewed as deaf;
Prayers have been offered up to me as Kneph.

"I have no eyes, yet many a king and queen
Have bowed before me merely to be seen.

"I have no feet; relentless is my pace.
I have no arms; a python's my embrace.

"Something to bless and something to revile,
I am old Egypt's life—I am the Nile!"

That is what I heard on a Nile lagoon
Watered by the mountains—Mountains of the Moon.

Richard Butler Glaenzer

WILDA BENNETT, LEADING WOMAN IN "APPLE BLOSSOMS," THE NEW OPERETTA BY FRITZ KREISLER AND VICTOR JACOBI, WHICH HAS SCORED A HIGH-POWER SUCCESS

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

AT the Playwrights' Club one of the members read a first act, detailed to his fellows briefly what was to follow, and then sat back to listen to their criticism—the usual course of procedure in the organization. As it happened, half a dozen of the first comments were adverse, but the last three speakers rated the play highly. This left it a debatable question whether it had benefited the author to submit his work to the judgment of the club; for a writer is naturally inclined to dwell upon the praise that he receives rather than to profit by censure.

One of the fault-finders gave it as his opinion that the playwright seemed more anxious to expound a pet theory of his own with regard to love and marriage than to interest his audience in his manner of presenting it. This neglect to consider what should be, after all, the court of first resort is by no means confined to playwrights. John Drinkwater, author of "Abraham Lincoln"—which has been running for the past ten months in London, and is now to be produced here—pillories the actor-manager as a sinner in this respect. In an interview for the *Sun,* on his arrival in New York, he said:

"We're trying to write dramas for their own sake, and not for the actors. In England, during the last forty years, the play itself has been allowed to go by the board, and the theater has been given over wholly to the actor. This has been very bad for both the actor and the drama. A revolution has now set in among playwrights who want to do their work for its own sake and then pick the actors to fit into it afterward."

The decay of the star system in America has worked to the advantage of the theater. Most of the hits of the new season, thus far, have been scored by plays acted with hand-picked casts—plays selected by their producers with an eye single to their power to engage the attention of the public, not to set forth the author's private ideas or to permit a particular actor or actress to shine. There is every reason that this should be so. With the increased cost of theatergoing—I believe there is not a two-dollar house left on Broadway—audiences are entitled to get their money's worth at all moments, not now and then when the high-priced star happens to strut before them. Besides, they like to make discoveries for themselves, to have surprises handed them.

The knock-out surprise of the autumn was a good play by Booth Tarkington. Following the production of his "Up from Nowhere"—written in collaboration with Harry Leon Wilson, with whom he did "The Man from Home"—one could scarcely pick up a Sunday paper without finding a fresh flaying of the Indiana author because he persisted in misfitting himself to the stage, instead of being content to remain between book-covers, where he can be so thoroughly delightful. So, at least, averred the metropolitan reviewers who had to sit out his first nights. Then along came "Clarence," wholly Mr. Tarkington's own, and confounded the critics by proving the most delightful light comedy that New York has had the luck to see in many a season.

George Tyler, about whose methods of play-picking I told you something in the October MUNSEY, was the fortunate manager to secure this find. Although the piece had been tried out at Atlantic City during the summer, no advance whisperings as to its real worth had reached Broadway.

Clarence is a returned soldier who, going to a captain of industry for a job, chances to overhear some compromising talk about domestic infelicities. To prevent the young man from spreading gossip abroad, the millionaire makes an undefined position for him in his own household. Here *Clarence* remains for three weeks, doing anything from trying to tune the piano to repairing the furnace, and meanwhile engaging the interest of every female in the mansion. His own affections center upon one of them, a governess to *Cora,* the sixteen-year-old daughter, played to the pink of perfection by Helen Hayes, better even than she was as Gillette's dream-child in "Dear Brutus."

The *Clarence* is Alfred Lunt, remembered as the poet of Laura Hope Crews's short-lived starring flight, two years ago, in "Romance and Arabella." He also followed Eugene O'Brien as the lover in "The Country Cousin." I can't conceive of a better man for the young entomologist who, when asked about his experiences as a soldier, says that he drove mules without swearing, and that he was wounded, not at Château-Thierry, as *Mrs. Wheeler* fondly dreamed, but at target practise in Texas.

Lunt's repose is wonderful, bringing out with all the more telling effect his animation in the last act, where, started on his hobby, he talks seven hundred words to the minute about beetles, while *Violet* wants only to hear about himself. Over and above all this, he plays the saxophone. As it happens, he had to learn both that instrument and the piano after he was picked for *Clarence* — which fortunate selection was made in Boston last spring, when Mr. Tarkington saw him in "The Country Cousin."

Lunt, who is only twenty-six, was born in Milwaukee, and has played Ibsen in the Swedish language in amateur companies in Finland, where he lived for a time after his mother married a Finlander. Returning to America, he matriculated at Harvard, but never got nearer Cambridge than Boston. A letter he had to John Craig, of the Castle Square stock company, burned in his pocket, so he presented it, and was taken on at five dollars a week, his first part being that of a dragon in a musical comedy, "The Gingerbread Man." After that he did character parts so successfully that he seemed destined to remain in a groove with them. To get out of it, he welcomed an offer from Margaret Anglin, with whom he went on the road as leading man in "Beverley's Balance." This was in 1914.

He remained with Miss Anglin a year and a half, which included participation in her classical productions at Berkeley, California. Then followed vaudeville with Mrs. Langtry and Laura Hope Crews, the latter engagement leading up to his part in "Romance and Arabella." Alexandra Carlisle chanced to see him, and suggested he was the man to succeed O'Brien in "The Country Cousin."

A fine portrayal in "Clarence" comes

HELEN HAYES, WHO HAS ADDED TO HER LAURELS BY HER PLAYING OF THE FLAPPER IN BOOTH TARKINGTON'S CLEVER COMEDY, "CLARENCE"

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

from Glenn Hunter, as the youth who has been expelled from three boarding-schools, and who cherishes a keen contempt for his young sister's doings. Of an altogether different type from the *Willie Baxter* of "Seventeen," the *Bobby Wheeler* of "Clarence," as Hunter shows him to us, will rank equally high in public esteem. He followed Paul Kelly as *Robert Williams* in "Penrod," and previous to that appeared in "Pollyanna." Helen Hayes, I may add, was *Penrod's* sister.

Nor must I omit mention of the good work done by Elsie Mackay in the difficult rôle of *Violet,* the governess—the peaches-and-cream, not the prunes-and-prisms type, understand. She is a find of Cyril Maude's, with whom she served as leading woman in "Grumpy." Born in Australia and educated in Switzerland, she gained her first

INA CLAIRE, STARRING UNDER DAVID BELASCO IN "THE GOLD DIGGERS," A COMEDY OF CHORUS-GIRL LIFE BY AVERY HOPWOOD

From her latest photograph

histrionic experiences on the London stage, where she played with Mrs. Patrick Campbell in Shaw's "Pygmalion."

Mary Boland, as stepmother to the two incorrigible young *Wheelers,* contrives to get away with a still more trying character than *Violet's.* You will doubtless remember her as leading woman to John Drew for several seasons, notably in "Jack Straw" and "Smith." In fact, nearly all her career has been spent in English plays, although she is an American, a native of Detroit. It was while acting in London with Robert Edeson that she first attracted the attention of Charles Frohman. Two seasons ago she played the name part in Horace Vachell's "The Case of Lady Camber."

If those of you who are fortunate enough to see "Clarence" are trying to place the butler, Barlowe Borland, I'll come to your assistance with the reminder that he was *Peter,* the tailor's helper with Grant Mitchell in "A Tailor-Made Man."

Now that "Clarence" has placed Tarkington squarely in the middle of the playwrights' puddle, I'm hoping that a producer will come forward with an offer to do "The Oriole," a story of his that I read last summer. The chief personages are all under their teens, and the *motif* is blackmail — two elements which, I admit, would appear to swear at each other in any attempt to combine them into an evening's entertainment; but the character work is delicious. If

RUTH CHATTERTON, STARRING IN A NEW COMEDY, "MOONLIGHT AND HONEYSUCKLE"

From her latest photograph by White, New York

HELEN MACKELLAR, THE ONLY WOMAN IN "THE STORM," A PLAY OF THE WILDS, WITH WONDERFUL TEMPEST AND FOREST-FIRE EFFECTS

From her latest photograph

Lillian Ross, the *Jane* in "Seventeen," is not too grown up—she is just twenty—I can think of no more competent actress to create the girl who upsets almost an entire community by her efforts to declare herself in on an amateur paper conducted by two boys, who at first refuse to let her even set type, but later find themselves weak slaves to her every whim.

In connection with the wave of dramatic prosperity on which Tarkington will now ride, I am wondering if he recalls certain statements credited to him in Pittsburgh, something like ten years ago, in which, ac-

MARGALO GILLMORE, WHO IS THE FLAPPER IN THE COMEDY BY BOOTH TARKINGTON AND HARRY LEON WILSON, "UP FROM NOWHERE"

From a photograph by White, New York

PEGGY WOOD, ONE OF THE THREE STARS IN "BUDDIES," THE NEW PLAY OF AMERICAN ARMY LIFE IN FRANCE

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

PHOEBE FOSTER, LEADING WOMAN IN THE NEW PLAY BY EARL DERR BIGGERS AND CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, "THREE'S A CROWD"

From her latest photograph by Sarony, New York

cording to the *Dramatic Mirror,* he is reported to have said:

I never wanted to be a writer, and unless I am absolutely forced to do so, I have written my last book. My ambition in life was to become an illustrator, and I once thought I was in a fair way to reach my goal. I have but one ambition—to make money enough to get out of this playwriting mess and purchase a nice farm in Indiana, where I can lead the life of a country gentleman, with just enough to keep me from want—nothing more.

Another American writer of books achieved his first good notices as a playwright within a few days of the hit registered by "Clarence." To be sure, Earl Derr Biggers had the royalties of his "Seven Keys to Baldpate" to revel in, but the play made from that was done by George Cohan, while "Inside the Lines," a war drama offered in 1915, made no particular stir. Now, however, Mr. Biggers—born in Warren, Ohio—has himself turned a novel that he wrote five years ago, "Love Insurance," into a musical comedy, and under the title of "See-Saw," with tunes by Louis Hirsch of "Going Up" renown, it ran nine weeks at the Cohan Theater before taking to the road.

Without anything startlingly new in its matter, the manner of the piece and the excellent production that our old friend Colonel Savage has given it furnish just the sort of entertainment normal theatergoers are looking for. Mr. Biggers has written his own lyrics, and in some of them —notably "Señorita-Señorita"—he has achieved distinct originality.

Dorothea Mackaye, previously in "The Big Idea" and "Head Over Heels," makes an extremely attractive figure as the heiress engaged to the English lord but in love with the young American whom she met as a canteen worker in France. Opposite her, as the young man connected with Lloyd's, sworn to see that the Englishman gets the girl, we find Frank Carter, last year with the Ziegfeld Follies. Of course, he is the fellow from France, and of course he does not know that this girl of all girls is the one on whose marriage to somebody else his company has issued a policy!

Carter was only eight when he began his theatrical career in Kansas City. It was in a vaudeville house, and although he had a good deal to do with the programs, his name never appeared on them, because he only passed them out as one of the ushers. Nobody need despise such lowly posts in the amusement world, however, for was not Abraham L. Erlanger once in charge of the cloak-room and opera-glass stand in the Cleveland Academy of Music?

It was not management but acrobatics that lured young Carter, and at sixteen we find him doing a ninety-foot dive into an improvised pond in a circus. Fortunately for his future career, he one day miscalculated his landing-spot and was sent to the hospital. On recovering, he decided that a song and dance between the reels in a small Chicago motion-picture house was not so hazardous, if less remunerative. When he discovered that the audiences seemed to prefer his work in the flesh to the reflected shadows on the screen, he put his modesty in his pocket and went to a big-time vaudeville theater with the news that here was a newcomer in their line whom it would be well for the management not to overlook. Once booked at the Majestic, his future was assured, and after a period in the varieties that took him all over Europe he left them for the Winter Garden in 1914.

A cheery spot in "See-Saw" is Charles Meakins as the publicity man—a far cry from his *Prince Danielo* in "The Merry Widow," in which he followed Donald Brian. As you may imagine, this clever performer from Hamilton, Ontario, had not then taken on the girth which now confines his field to comedy.

Just as last autumn we had a heavy barrage of war plays, so this year postbellum comedy has multiplied itself upon our stages. "The Five Million" led the way; then came "Civilian Clothes," followed by "Clarence," all of American make, with "Too Many Husbands," by Somerset Maugham—imported from London, where it was known as "Home and Beauty"—completing the quartet.

Thompson Buchanan wrote "Civilian Clothes." While it lacks the sparkle of his "A Woman's Way," for Grace George, this story of the canteen worker who secretly marries a captain in France, and who is shocked, later on, by her husband's appearance in Kentucky with bright yellow shoes and a red tie, hits home so hard in many respects that the author will doubtless find the play his second-best money-maker. I found it hard to believe that the best way to learn the manners of polite society is to become a butler, which is what *Sam McGinnis* does in the home of his wife; but as most of the plays in which the characters disguise themselves as servants appear to succeed, I suppose Mr. Buchanan simply could not resist this way out of the dilemma he had set himself.

Oliver Morosco has helped in no small measure with an excellent cast, headed by Thurston Hall for *McGinnis*. You may recall Mr. Hall as *Kim* in "The Only Girl," the musical comedy that pleased so many of us back in 1915. A native of Boston,

MARJORIE HAST, DAUGHTER OF WALTER HAST, THE PRODUCER—MISS HAST PLAYS THE PART OF REGINA WATERHOUSE IN "SCANDAL"

From a photograph

QUEENIE SMITH, DANCER FROM THE METROPOLITAN, WHO HAS A PROMINENT RÔLE IN "ROLY-BOLY EYES," THE NEW MUSICAL PLAY OF MINSTREL LIFE, FEATURING EDDIE LEONARD

From a photograph by the Campbell Studios, New York

young Hall chose the theater instead of college, got Denman Thompson of "The Old Homestead" to help him through the stage door, and in due course reached New York as *Mr. Bob* in the original production of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." After that he served as leading man for Lillian Russell in "Wildfire," and after a season as *Ben-Hur* acquired a thorough training in stock companies all over the American map.

It was in stock, in Rochester, by the way, that Charles Dillingham found Olive Tell, the heroine in "Civilian Clothes," whom he brought to New York to play the leading woman in "General Post" two years ago. Both she and her sister Alma were trained in a well-known school of acting.

At that same school, two years ago, I happened to see Margalo Gillmore graduate. She is the daughter of Frank Gillmore, secretary of the Actors' Equity, and formerly a member of the company at the New Theater on Central Park West, whose failure to endure was one of the keenest disappointments in my experience of Manhattan theatricals. Miss Gillmore, whose portrait will be found on page 531, is one of the few bright spots in "Up from Nowhere," and I feel sure that she will bear watching if you like to note the upward trend of those who really deserve to rise.

As in "Civilian Clothes," a capital cast does much for "Moonlight and Honeysuckle," starring Ruth Chatterton at the Henry Miller, where Mrs. Fiske reigned so delightfully last spring in another piece that also played up the moonbeams. And by the same token, I have discovered certain notes in Miss Chatterton's voice that remind me strikingly of the best ones in Mrs. Fiske's. "Moonlight and Honeysuckle"—called intermittently "The Merrie Month of May" while on tour—was written by George Scarborough, and flirts with audacity so delightfully that I could wish Cosmo Hamilton might take a Scarborough course in learning how to do it.

The scene is laid in Washington — which must convey happy memories to Miss Chatterton, for it was in the national capital that she made her stage start, quite by accident, one summer not so long ago, when she was only sixteen. She had a friend in a stock

OLIVE TELL, LEADING WOMAN IN "CIVILIAN CLOTHES," A COMEDY OF THE RETURNED SOLDIER

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

company there on whom she was wont to call during the matinées. Noticing her going in and out at the stage door, the manager told her one day that she was just the *Polly* he wanted for the next week's production of " Merely Mary Ann." Although she declared that she had never acted in her life and knew nothing about the theater, the man told her that her lack of experience was no disadvantage, so she went on, with her mother's consent, and made good.

Still stranger was the fashion in which Mr. Miller was led to engage her the next year—by simply hearing her voice over the telephone, without ever seeing her. Her first play under his management was " The Rainbow," followed by " Daddy Long Legs," then " Come Out of the Kitchen," and last autumn " Perkins," imported from England, and a flash in the pan. " Moonlight and Honeysuckle " was presented for the first time in Baltimore last March, and, oddly enough, its leading man was engaged by Mr. Miller " sight unseen," almost in the same fashion as Miss Chatterton had been for " The Rainbow."

In her case the telephone did the trick; with James Rennie it was a wireless message to the ship that was bringing him back from France. Unable to find just the actor for the part of the ranch foreman, Mr. Miller became desperate, when one of his lieutenants suggested a young man who had once been in the Municipal Theater stock at Northampton, Massachusetts. He proved a happy find indeed, and shared chief honors with Miss Chatterton in the New York notices.

At " Moonlight and Honeysuckle's " first night on Broadway, Tom Powers—now the lover with Billie Burke in " Cæsar's Wife "—happened to be in the audience, and recognized young Rennie as a chap whom he had trained for flights while they were both in the Royal Flying Corps, recruited in Canada. Powers himself was badly hurt in France, for a fall of his plane smashed his leg and laid him up in hospital for seven months, leaving him with a barely perceptible limp. On his recovery he was persuaded to go into his old part in " Oh, Boy "—known as " Oh, Joy " in London, where, in a letter he wrote me last spring, he recorded this vow:

> No more musical plays for me, thank you. After you go skylarking through a big fat bank of fog in a little flying-machine that will do one hundred and twenty miles on the level, and just miss the top of a good solid rock mountain on the other side, you want something with more reality in its situations than the loose-jointed, sievelike structure of old friend musical comedy to give you a thrill of work. If I ever get to the place where I can play a real live comedy, with no beautiful chorus queens to bound recklessly on and stand in a semicircle behind me while I talk rot, I'll thank God. Never again let me try to speak anybody's lines while just behind me a little blond flapper is saying *sotto voce:*
>
> " No, not the second row—the fourth row—the one with the military cross."

It is these same " beautiful chorus queens " who dominate Belasco's first venture of the season, Avery Hopwood's comedy, " The Gold Diggers," serving to put Ina Claire's name in electric lights. It's a very frank play, but spades are called spades not to emphasize the soil-encrusted character of the implement, but because in no other fashion could the mirror be held up so faithfully to the particular phase of Manhattan life that the playwright has set out to depict. While Hopwood has not reached the brilliant flights he attained in " Fair and Warmer," he accomplishes the miracle of leaving a pleasant taste in the mouth as his audience departs, so I feel safe in saying that the Lyceum is likely to house a Belasco offering for the third winter in succession. Nevertheless, when all's said and done, Miss Claire's *Jerry Lamar* does not give her a tithe of the opportunities afforded by her " Polly with a Past."

Most of the laughs in " The Gold Diggers " fall to Jobyna Howland, as the statuesque member of the chorus whose chief aim in the present is to provide for the future. She was the woman from New York in " A Little Journey " last winter.

For the rôle of the former star of comic opera, reduced to selling soap among the rising favorities of the stage, Mr. Belasco picked Pauline Hall, whose first appearance was made at her birthplace, Cincinnati, as a ballet dancer in 1875. Ten years later she entered upon her notable career at the New York Casino, the outstanding feature of which was her *Erminie* with Francis Wilson. That this old favorite has not been forgotten by a generation addicted to jazz and monkey fur is attested by the long-sustained applause that greets her entrance on a scene in " The Gold Diggers " lasting a bare five minutes.

SOME GREAT ACTING

The triumph of John and Lionel Barrymore in " The Jest " was not permitted to

LOUISE DYER, LEADING WOMAN IN EUGENE WALTER'S TIMELY SOCIOLOGICAL PLAY, "THE CHALLENGE"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

stand alone in the family annals. With their sister's appearance at the Empire on October 6 as *Lady Helen Haden* in "Déclassée," Ethel Barrymore eclipsed all her previous triumphs and proved for a third time within a twelvemonth that the blue blood of stageland courses all the more spiritedly for having flowed through four generations. After toying with English plays for the past few seasons, since she gave us *Emma McChesney* in 1915, Miss Barrymore has found a vehicle that permits her to ring all the changes in the gamut of emotions that she has so easily at her command. Not even as *Zoë Blundell* in Pinero's "Mid-Channel," which she did at this same Empire in 1910, did she have the opportunity to rise to such heights as she achieves in this character of an Englishwoman who, divorced by her husband, comes to New York, where she struggles in vain to escape from the shadow of an unhappy love.

No advance whisper told us what we might expect from Miss Barrymore's new venture with native wares. Indeed, from my recollections of "Papa," by Zoë Akins, at the Little Theater last spring, I anticipated the worst, although a one-act piece by this same writer from Missouri, brought out by the Washington Square Players in 1916, and called "The Magical City," had a somewhat happier fate.

Miss Barrymore has just reached forty, having been born in Philadelphia on August 15, 1879. Her first real part was that of *Kate Fennell* in "The Bauble Shop," which she played in the company of her uncle, John Drew, in 1894. She became a star in "Captain Jinks," by Clyde Fitch, at the Garrick Theater, February 4, 1901, under the management of the late Charles Frohman, loyalty to whose memory still incites his lieutenants to place at the head of the program the familiar phrase, "Charles Frohman presents."

"APPLE BLOSSOMS" A DELIGHT

Charles Dillingham deliberately set out to give the public something extra fine in the way of light musical entertainment this season. To this end he requisitioned two composers—Fritz Kreisler, the famous violinist, and Victor Jacobi, who wrote the score for "Sybil." For the basis of his plot he went as far back as "A Marriage under Louis XV," by Dumas—played here as a comedy a year and a half ago by Billie Burke and Henry Miller—and called in William Le Baron, author of "The Very Idea," to transfer the scene to America, with Urban settings. There then remained the cast, and this he selected with the same care, picking Wilda Bennett for the girl who marries for convenience and finds she loves her husband—the latter being John Charles Thomas, weaned from his grand-opera aspirations long enough to give his fine voice to "Apple Blossoms."

The result of the foregoing conspiracy to intrigue the interest of the public proved to be one of the most charming operettas Broadway has seen since Belgium was invaded. Its success is already so pronounced that Fred Stone records in attendance at the Globe will probably go crumbling before spring.

You may recall Wilda Bennett last winter as Donald Brian's wife in "The Girl Behind the Gun." The year before that she sang the name-part in "The Riviera Girl." Her first New York hit was made as *Wilson*, the heroine, in "The Only Girl," season of 1914-1915. Born in Asbury Park, she should be among the happiest of mortals, for since she was a tiny girl it has been her greatest ambition to sing in light opera. Her first part on the professional stage was with the Henry W. Savage Company as *Conscience* in "Everywoman."

By an odd coincidence it was as *Passion* in this same morality play that John Charles Thomas secured his first chance at acting. He is the son of a Methodist minister in Baltimore, and from the road company of "Everywoman" he passed to the Winter Garden, to become an Indian in "The Passing Show of 1913." His first real Broadway recognition came with his creation of *Bolo* in "The Peasant Girl," the following season, and a year later he strengthened the good impression then made by his work as the lead in the Lehar operetta, "Alone at Last." It was in the latter that Roy Atwell, now in "Apple Blossoms" as valet to Thomas, sang his celebrated song about "Some Little Bug Will Get You."

Comedy is also supplied by Percival Knight, coauthor of "The Better 'Ole." He is an English actor who scored heavily here as the jockey in "The Arcadians," ten years ago. He was also in "Getting Together," the British-Canadian war-mission play, in the writing of which Mr. Knight had a hand.

The Odd Measure

The Automobile As a Teacher

Its Vivid Way of Giving Lessons in Geography

THOUSANDS of children are finding their school work made easier and more interesting by their automobile travels. Nothing quite equals a journey across several States, through famous cities, among romantic mountains, and over great rivers, as a lesson, or a series of lessons, in the lay of the land. Political geography, with its various spheres and methods of government, is illustrated in new and vivid lights. The condition of the highways, the care taken of municipal parks and camp-grounds, the attention paid to a city's beauty, its prosperity, and the development of its opportunities, are seen in comparison with the failures and successes of other communities.

As to physical geography, the most impressive of lessons follow one another. First views of the oceans, of the Great Lakes, of lofty mountain ranges, are unrolled in majestic succession. Once seen, the vast plains of sage and alkali, the Salt Lake Desert, the level prairies, the buttes and mesa, and countless phases of the earth's formation, are indelibly fixed in the traveler's mind—especially in the memory of youth. When in school the question of a State's principal product is asked, will the boy who ate grapes, watermelons or oranges, who saw thousand-acre cornfields, square miles of alfalfa, great herds of cattle attended by cowboys, whole mountains cut up by ore scoops, trains loading with the logs from one tree, rich cotton bottoms, sorghum boiling into molasses—will he forget when and where he tasted such delicious provender or witnessed such stupendous scenes?

Every child who travels in a motor-car has a map of some part of the world set before him. An automobile journey from ocean to ocean, such as thousands of boys and girls have taken during the past year, may do more to quicken the youthful grasp of facts and ideas than months spent over the dull printed page—but indeed, after such a trip, no page of a geography is dull. Every word describing any far place or scene which the scholar's own eyes have looked upon is full of interest.

* * * * *

Unpleasant Phases of Automobile Travel

The Shocking Vandalism of Inconsiderate Tourists

WHILE automobile travel has done much for the health, pleasure, and education of thousands of people, and has helped to spread the knowledge of our own country and to promote the feeling of national unity, it has other phases that are less pleasant to contemplate. Motor-car tourists are of all kinds, and too many of them are shockingly indifferent to the rights of others. To the owners of estates along the Hudson River, for instance, these inconsiderate travelers are a sore trial, as is testified by the ubiquity of sign-boards warning against trespass on private grounds and protesting against the promiscuous scattering of picnickers' rubbish.

Farther West they seem to be bolder, for along the Lincoln Highway, in Iowa and Nebraska, we hear of sheriffs having been called out to deal with tourists who were raiding the chicken-roosts and even killing calves and pigs. Fish and game laws have been recklessly defied, and fences torn down to make fires for campers. "We'll be here only once," is the selfish motto of the vandals. Schoolhouses have been broken into, their windows smashed, their books torn, their fuel appropriated, their well-pumps put out of order, and their yards cluttered with the refuse of corn-roasts or melon feasts—the corn and melons having been stolen from some near-by farm.

For one traveling outfit that "picks up" after itself, it is to be feared

that there are half a dozen that leave litter and débris to mark their careless way. The privileges of the camp-grounds provided by many Western cities are too often shamefully abused, so that later comers find foul accommodations and have to endure dirt and evil odors. As a result, the value of the camp-ground system has been seriously impaired, for travelers of the better class are careful to shun the dangers of a polluted stopping-place.

The problem of tens or hundreds of thousands of tourists and campers carried all over the country by the magical power of the gasoline engine is one that calls for the attention of legislators and health commissioners. It is understood that in several Western States strict regulations are likely to be put in force to deal with the evils that have developed so rapidly of late.

* * * * *

A Woman's War-Time Invention

Mrs. Hertha Ayrton's New Idea in Ventilation

"TEACH me," says the poet, "how to flirt a fan as the Spanish ladies can." The dark-eyed beauties of Spain may be experts in the coquetry of the fan, but an Englishwoman, Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, has demonstrated its practical usefulness. Her ideas are now being applied in factories, motion-picture theaters, mines, and wherever noxious gases are generated, and they are not unlikely to revolutionize our whole theory of ventilation.

Mrs. Ayrton, a scientist herself and the widow of a scientist, was exercised during the war by the problem of expelling poisonous gas from the trenches, from dugouts, and from hollows in uneven ground, where it lay long after the attacking wave had passed over. She discovered that the proper way to use a fan is not to wave it about, making the air undulate over a wide space, but to bring it down sharply from the perpendicular to the horizontal, driving the air before it in steady puffs and setting up a fresh current from behind. On this simple principle she constructed an antigas fan.

The Ayrton antigas fan is not more than twenty inches square, constructed of light material, and working on the hinge and spring principle. It was used by the British troops during the last months of the war, and the soldiers gladly testify to its effectiveness. The inventor has given public demonstrations in London with glass models of dugouts and tunnels, from which smoke, which was employed instead of gas, was expelled readily and effectively.

At one of these demonstrations, Mrs. Ayrton, with a three-inch fan, sat at one end of a six-foot table while smoke was poured down from a funnel at the other end. The action of the miniature fan not only dispelled the fumes, but quickly gained such control over them that the current of air set up prevented the smoke from coming out of the funnel. The use of this antigas fan in cases of accumulated sewer gas has also been crowned with success, the fan in this case being applied at the manhole.

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The Paravane and Its Inventor

A Device That Saved a Billion Dollars' Worth of Ships and Cargoes During the War

IN a paper read before the British Association during its recent meeting at Bournemouth, England—the society's first meeting since 1916—a shipping expert stated it as a matter of record that "the Allied countries are indebted to the paravane invention for saving ships and cargoes during the war to the value of two hundred million pounds"—or about a billion dollars.

The paravane was the invention of a British naval officer, Commander C. B. Burney, and a few of his friends in the Grand Fleet, who had good reason to know what a deadly menace men-of-war and merchant shipping had to face in navigating waters sown with German mines. As in the case of the tanks, it was difficult, at first, to convince the official mind that the machine was a workable one, and after a little effort on it the Admir-

alty ordered all further experiments to cease. Commander Burney, however, had faith in his idea and finally succeeded in carrying his point. As a result, practically every British war-ship and more than three thousand merchant vessels were fitted with the new device.

The paravane is a comparatively simple mechanism which makes every ship its own mine-sweeper. The body of the instrument is shaped like a shark, with strong jaws in which an automatic wire-cutter is placed, while a flat plane is laid across its back. The bow of the ship is extended downward in a straight line, and from its base two towing-wires flow out like a wedge, each carrying a submerged paravane, so that the two machines flank the vessel at a distance of about one hundred feet on each side. The towing-wires catch the mooring-cable of the mine, and, as the ship advances, they carry the mine and its sinker down the wedge until the cable reaches the sharklike jaws of the paravane and is cut. Thereupon the sinker drops to the bottom of the sea, while the mine becomes a floater and is driven by the wash well clear of the ship, where it can be seen and destroyed by rifle fire. One British captain is quoted as saying that he cut three mines in fifteen minutes while passing through a North Sea mine-field.

Since the war, the paravane has been used by the British and American navies to sweep up mine-fields. For this purpose it was attached to shallow-draft destroyers which proceeded at a speed of thirty knots through the mined areas, cutting the mine-cables as they went.

The paravane is the most notable antimine device invented during the war.

* * * * *

The Centenary of James Watt

The Father of the Steam-Engine Died One Hundred Years Ago

A RECENT centenary which passed practically without notice, at least in this country, was that of the death of James Watt, the Scottish inventor to whom the modern world owes so much of its wonderful material progress. There is a statue of Watt in Westminister Abbey with an epitaph composed by Lord Brougham, which reads:

> Directing the force of an original genius, early exercised in philosophical research, to the improvement of the steam-engine, he enlarged the resources of his country, increased the power of man, and rose to an eminent place among the more illustrious followers of science and the real benefactors of the world.

James Watt set out from Glasgow for London at the age of nineteen to seek his fortune; and it is recorded that, traveling on horseback, he took twelve days for a journey which now, owing to the results of his invention, can be accomplished in less than eight hours. Of course, he was not the first man to experiment with steam-power, for Hero of Alexandria did so about two thousand years ago; but he was the first to build a real steam-engine. The best previous effort was the so-called atmospheric engine of Thomas Newcomen, which was in actual use, in the middle of the eighteenth century, for pumping water out of coal-mines. In 1764 Watt was called on to repair one of these primitive machines, and the radical improvements that he devised took shape, a year later, in the earliest Watt engine.

It was Richard Trevithick, a Cornish mining engineer, who first adapted Watt's ideas to the propulsion of cars. In 1804 Trevithick had a steam locomotive, probably the first railway engine in the world, making trials on a colliery tramway at Pen-y-Darrar, in Wales, but it was not found to be economically worth while, and the beginning of practical railroading had to wait nearly two decades for George Stephenson.

The steamboat developed more rapidly, for in 1805 Watt and his partner, Matthew Boulton, supplied Robert Fulton with an engine for the Claremont. The Charlotte Dundas, a small pleasure-boat, had before this been plying on the Forth and Clyde Canal at a speed of seven miles an

hour, but the Clermont was the first passenger steamship, and her trip of one hundred and fifty miles between New York and Albany was a test of reliability and commercial utility.

We have traveled a long way in engines since Watt's day, but it is interesting to recall that he wrote of his early triumphs:

> The velocity, violence, magnitude, and horrible noise of my engine give universal satisfaction to all beholders.

* * * * *

Watt's "Kist of Whistles"

The First Organ Ever Used in a Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland

JAMES WATT was interested in many researches and inventions besides the one that brought him fame and fortune. He received patents for a steam-hammer, a screw propeller, a copying-press, a machine for reproducing sculpture, and other new or improved mechanical devices. A practically forgotten incident in his career is the fact that he designed and built the first organ ever used in a Scottish Presbyterian church. It was originally a small chamber organ which he constructed for his own use when he was an instrument-maker in Glasgow. When he went to live in Birmingham, where he became a partner in Boulton's iron-works, he left the organ in Glasgow, and it came into the possession of the minister of St. Andrew's Church.

For some time Watt's organ was used only for choir practise, on week-days, being covered up and kept out of sight on the Sabbath. One Sunday in August, 1807, however, it was played during the service, the performer being an organist of the Episcopal faith. The Episcopalians, at that time, were known in Scotland as "the whistling kirk," because they had adopted the organ—called by good Presbyterians "a kist of whistles"—as a legitimate part of their church music. Presbyterian Glasgow was shocked by the innovation at St. Andrew's. The presbytery declared the use of the new instrument contrary to kirk law, and Watt's organ was ignominiously cast out after a solitary service. It is said to be still in existence, in the house of a Scottish country squire near Biggar.

Not until 1860 was the use of the organ tolerated in St. Andrew's, Glasgow.

* * * * *

The Succession to the Throne of Holland

After the Little Crown Princess, It May Go to Prince Harold of Denmark

THE Queen of the Netherlands is in her fortieth year, and has been married for nearly twenty years, but her only child is the Crown Princess Juliana, now a girl of ten—the age at which her mother came to the throne. The hope of the Dutch that Queen Wilhelmina would have a son being apparently doomed to disappointment, there has been a strong feeling in Holland that the succession to the crown should be more securely settled than is now the case. After the little crown princess, the next lineal heir is the queen's cousin, the former Grand Duke of Saxony, a grandson of Princess Sophia of Holland; but it is not likely that the accession of a German princeling, rejected by his own people, would be tolerated by the Dutch, who have no lack of national pride. It is understood that the most probable nominee is Prince Harald, or Harold, of Denmark, a younger brother of King Christian X. He has the blood of the House of Orange in his veins, for his maternal grandmother was Princess Louise, daughter of Prince Frederick of Holland, and wife of Charles XV of Sweden.

If a Danish prince should eventually succeed to the throne of the Netherlands, it would not be the first time that a foreign crown has come to a member of his family. Prince Harold's uncle, Prince William of Denmark, became King George of Greece in 1863; and in 1905, when Norway separated from Sweden and sought a sovereign of her own, she chose his elder brother, Prince Charles, who took the Norwegian title of Haakon VII. Moreover, two of his aunts donned important crowns as

queen consorts—Alexandra of England, wife of the late Edward VII, and Dagmar of Russia, mother of the ill-fated Nicholas II.

* * * * *

The Church of the Percys

They Are Leading Members of the Catholic Apostolic Communion

BEFORE Viscount Grey accepted the British ambassadorship at Washington, one of the men mentioned for that important post was Lord Eustace Percy, who is remembered as a member of the late Sir Cecil Spring-Rice's staff at the embassy on Connecticut Avenue.

Percy is the family name of the ducal house of Northumberland, though it is only through a female line that the present holder of the title is descended from the famous Harry Percy whose "spur was cold" when he fell in battle against Henry IV on the hard-fought field of Shrewsbury. The Percys were stanch Roman Catholics all through the Reformation, and long after; but about 1830 the head of the house identified himself with a movement which received its first inspiration from Edward Irving, an eloquent Scottish preacher in London, and which sought to heal the breach between Rome and Protestantism by returning to the simpler forms of early Christianity. The Catholic Apostolic Church, as the new sect was called, fixed its central seat at Alnwick, the home of the Dukes of Northumberland, and it gained a sprinkling of adherents in several other countries.

It has three congregations in New York. Their ministers are called "angels," and the quiet charity of their members has brought help to many needy homes. Indeed, activity in charitable work seems to be one of the fundamental principles of this church which is neither Catholic nor Protestant; nor does it confine its benevolence to its own adherents.

Lord Eustace Percy's elder brother not long ago succeeded their father as Duke of Northumberland and as the leading member of the church of the Percys. Lord Eustace himself may look forward to a distinguished career in the diplomatic service. He missed the appointment to Washington chiefly because of his youth, for he is only thirty-two.

* * * * *

The Campaign Against Sheep-Killing Dogs

Good Results Reported from a New England State

THERE appeared in this department, a few months ago, a brief article indicating the worthless dog of the American countryside as a national pest. There are various charges against him, but his rankest offense is the slaughter of about a hundred thousand sheep annually—not only a terrible record in itself, but doubly disastrous in its discouraging effect on what should be one of our leading branches of agricultural industry.

We have a vast acreage of land more suitable for sheep-raising than for any other form of production, and the demand for both meat and wool exceeds the supply; yet our flocks are far inferior to those of such countries as Australia and Argentina. In proportion to population Australia raises about fourteen sheep *per capita*, and Argentina ten, while we can show less than half of one. True, we no longer possess great empty ranges like those of the two countries mentioned; but even Great Britain, more than ten times as densely populated as the United States, excels us by fifty per cent in her number of sheep *per capita*.

Mention has already been made of the Department of Agriculture's campaign for better laws for the protection of sheep from dogs. A recent report shows the good results accomplished in Connecticut. It appears that during the twelve months ending with last September more than five thousand dogs were killed by the wardens, many of them being shot while actually attacking sheep. The damage to the flocks of the State was less than in any previous year, and the loss is likely to be still further reduced by a more stringent antidog law recently put into effect. With this encouragement to the farmers, it is not surprising to read that during the last two years the sheep industry in Connecticut has increased by one-third.

We shall hear less of abandoned farms among the hills of our Eastern States if the campaign against sheep-killing dogs is vigorously pushed.

Light Verse

AIR-CASTLES—A DIALOGUE

HE—"You build a chalet, if you will,
Set in a valley cool and still;
And I a tower shall rear
Within a coppice near."

SHE—"You catch the color of the dew,
And I the duller brooklet's hue,
And of them let us make
A lily-broidered lake."

HE—"Across your hedges odors sweet
Shall waft my pledges to your feet;
Rose-leaves adrift shall blow
And strew your portico."

SHE—"Night breezes roaming through your elms
Should change the gloaming into realms
Of angel land; a star
Should bring us peace from far."

HE—"My lute shall fashion lyric lore
To tell my passion o'er and o'er;
And in amens divine
Your voice will echo mine."

SHE—"And lo, a spirit nigh will stray,
And we shall hear it softly say:
'Love at the portal stands
In courts not made with hands.'"

HE—"Now bells of vesper ring, and we
The light of Hesper soon shall see;
Our dream must end as day,
Dust-pinioned, floats away."

SHE—"No dream has ending. Ever green,
The unseen, blending with the seen,
Bedecks in heavenly guise
Our castle in the skies."

——— *Clarence Urmy*

THE OLD ACTRESS

MY people all were actors, so
They put me on the stage—
And I was very glad to go—
At seven years of age.
Prince Arthur in "King John" I played,
And *York* in "Richard Third";
And when my curtain-bow was made,
The audience was stirred.

In "As You Like It," *Rosalind*
Brought me a great success;
Of bygone triumphs I'm inclined
To boast, I must confess.
In "Much Ado" as *Hero* I
Next triumphed. After that
As *Portia* in "The Merchant," why,
'Twas said I "knocked 'em flat"!

Of course I played *Ophelia,*
And was *Desdemona,* too;
As *Juliet* I kissed my hand
To kings and princes who
Are dead and gone. But I have thrived
On Shakespeare's noble verse;
In a production just revived,
Behold, I played the *Nurse!*

——— *Harold Seton*

BY APPOINTMENT

THE damsel that I have a date with
Is fair as the morning is fair;
I'd willingly face any fate with
A maid with so artless an air.
Her voice, it is something ecstatic;
No note that she touches is wrong;
She fills up my bald mental attic
With snatches of song.

And speak she in high key or low key,
No word that she utters seems prose;
Her feet are more light than a trochee,
Whenever, however she goes.
The webs that are wrought for her wearing
Are such as young April might bring,
And ever there is in her bearing
The charm of the spring.

Sometimes she is coy and capricious,
And little of favor confers;
And yet she's not vain and not vicious,
And so my heart's totally hers.
To-day there's no fly in the ointment—
I'm sure you'll rejoice at the news—
For I am to keep, by appointment,
A date with the Muse!

——— *Clinton Scollard*

MY CANTEEN CUP—A TOAST

HERE'S a health to my canteen cup!
Many times I've had it filled up
With a beverage more befitting for a toast;
And the leavings make this water
Taste a way it hadn't oughter,
But the mixture is enough to make me boast.

It has carried jam and gravy,
Soup enough to float a navy,
  That I've relished by the roadside in the rain.
It 'll go down into history
With its stews of deepest mystery;
  Seems there never will be stews like those again!

Don't forget the army coffee,
That our cookee made so oft, he
  Could beat the "*tassy café*" sold in town
Champagne, purloined from a palace,
Never graced a finer chalice;
  Old canteen cup, here's a health, so drink her down!

Douglas Kingston

A SEASONABLE CHANGE

HOW doth the busy little boy
  Who runs our elevator
Betray his elemental joy
  Whenever he sees Pater!
No longer now he lets us wait
  While phoning some dark beauty—
I tell you what, it's simply great
  The way he does his duty!

How doth the mighty janitor
  Unbend and grow most gracious,
Each day more pleasant than before,
  With smile more bland and spacious.
He gives us heat, the real kind, too—
  Our pipes are simply steaming;
I ask myself can this be true,
  Or am I simply dreaming?

How doth the maiden all forlorn
  Who types our office letters
Now radiate like rosy morn
  Upon her business betters!
I hear it's thus—I wonder why—
  From Nome down to the Isthmus.
Say, Santa Claus, are you the guy
  Who put the smile in Christmas?

William Wallace Whitelock

THE THRIFT STAMP

A THRIFT STAMP is a bonny thing
  To paste upon a snow-white card.
You'll find to heal the pauper's sting
A thrift stamp is a bonny thing;
It makes the future's joy-bells ring,
  And thrift stamp saving is not hard.
A thrift stamp is a bonny thing
  To paste upon a snow-white card!

Henrietta F. Dunlap

COUNTING THE KISSES

UNDER the mistletoe, waiting, waiting,
  Wondering who will the bough espy,
Pray, pretty maid, are you speculating
  As to the joys that in kisses lie?

Under the mistletoe, scheming, scheming—
  Oh, for a glance at your inmost heart!
Am I a madman that I am dreaming
  Mine are the lips that shall make love start?

Under the mistletoe, smiling, smiling—
  Surely those blushes are all for me!
Maidens at Christmas are so beguiling,
  Tempting and sweet in their modesty!

Under the mistletoe, swaying, swaying—
  Pressed to my heart I have called her mine!
Hark, 'tis the maiden gleefully saying:
  "Jack gave me six—now your three make nine!"

Lurana Sheldon

WHY NOT?

IF some day you're cross and blue,
  Keep hoping.
If your friend should prove untrue,
  Keep hoping.
If your neighbors bother you,
If you need a hat or two,
If you don't know what to do,
  Keep hoping!

If your pocketbook is flat,
  Keep hoping.
If your husband is too fat,
  Keep hoping.
For what good does fretting do?
Grayest skies will turn to blue;
Some day you'll be glad that you
  Kept hoping!

Mildred Honors

MISTLETOE

NOT a piece of mistletoe
  Anywhere about,
And the Yule log's singing so,
  And the lights are out!

Not a single little leaf
  Hanging overhead,
And the moments seem so brief,
  And your lips so red!

Not a piece of mistletoe
  Anywhere about,
And it's almost time to go!
  Pshaw, let's do without!

Ralph M. Thomson

AN OFFER

OH, Cupid, harken to my plea—
  Give heed unto my cry;
Extend your pity unto me,
  For sore dismayed am I.

Though Mabel offers me her hand,
  And Annabel beside,
By neither is my passion fanned;
  I seek another bride.

But though Theresa I adore,
  Of me she will have none;
Pray, Cupid, think this matter o'er—
  I'll give two hearts for one!

Harold Melbourne

Marble Halls

BY LYDIA M. D. O'NEIL

Illustrated by Irma Deremeaux

WELL, sir, there is some folks that likes Indians, and there is some that don't. After herdin' sheep for a season or two, people don't generally draw very fine distinctions between other people.

As to bein' civilized, I should say, on the whole, speakin' comparatively, of course, and allowin' for occasional exceptions, that they is.

There is that young buck, Bees-in-the-Barley; he throws as pretty a game of draw-poker as anybody I ever see, includin' Jack Law. And that other chap, Welcome Raindrops. His feet was just naturally born for stepping to jazz noise. You take it from me, and I hope my word is worth something, when you go to one of them cabriolets and see a new dance which is heralded as having been just brought over from Paris on the last steamer, it ain't so; Welcome Raindrops has been dancing it five weeks previous. Some movie star has been out West seekin' inspiration from the Grand Cañon or the Elephant Butte Dam, and has accidentally run onto Welcome Raindrops contorting around, greeting the weather with the poetry of motion, and has hooked it and took it home and sprung it on little old Manhattan.

Then there is another aborigine called Poison Onions. He has a way with the mitts which, if it belonged to Jack Johnson, would have hypnotized the Supreme Court into granting him a pardon, amnesty, and distinguished service decorations long ago.

So if you should ask me whether the noble red men was civilized, I should answer they is. Even if you make it a question of money, all I would remark is that *I'd* like to be as civilized as some of these redskins. Gentle Annie, for instance, which dwelt in marble halls.

Gentle Annie is the daughter of old man Hail-on-the-Hilltop, and sister to a buck named Hail-in-the-Valley. Once on a time, some time ago, there was a fat old guy from the Pennsylvania bar out Tarantula way, vacating for his health and investigatin' the prospects in copper. He trailed around solitary, unaware there was any such things on earth as hellbenders, blue lizards, or rattlesnakes, till one day he came a jumpin' into Hail-on-the-Hilltop's camp, hollering "Snake, snake!" and holding up his wrist to show the punctures he had got.

Young Hail-in-the-Valley sucked out the bite and put some kind of Indian salve on it, and told him it would be all right, and it was. Old Hail-on-the-Hilltop went to kill the snake, and later on he told around Tarantula that it was nothin' but a bull-snake, which does no damage on earth except to eat eggs and chickens; but as the fat old guy thought it was a poison one, he'd likely have died from the effects of his imagination if it hadn't been for Hail-in-the-Valley, so we don't consider that young Hail imposed on him none, even at that.

For you see, the old guy set such a store by having his life saved that he took young Hail and cultured him. He took him to town and had the barber give him a hair-cut, and got him regular city-cut clothes at Ted Sullivan's, and took him along back East, and changed his name so it would sound more poetic—I think he called him Daniel Jenkins, or something like that—and made a lawyer out of him. And that was the last we ever saw of Hail-in-the-Valley, but it wasn't the last we heard of him, not by the little brown jugful.

'Twasn't long till a letter came for Gentle Annie, the first one she ever got in her life. Seeing as how she never came to town more than twice a year or so, me and Jack Law took it out to her. And seeing as how Gentle Annie couldn't read, she told Jack to say what was in it.

Jack opened it, and his eyes bugged out. There was a check in it from young Hail; also a picture of young Hail dressed up in a bath-robe made out of a Navaho blanket. Young Hail said in the letter to tell old Hail that that was the new way of wearing blankets, and it skinned the old way clean to fragments. Also there was a picture of young Hail in a dress suit, and a newspaper clipping about the Indian warrior who had forsworn the tomahawk for the refined but more cruel weapons of demurrer and injunction.

Gentle Annie hollered for old Hail and her four young offspring—she being a widow—and all came *pronto* to listen and admire. Jack read the letter and the clipping over to 'em three or four times, and told 'em how the bank would give 'em hard cash for the check, and then me and him rode off.

Gentle Annie immediately give up the effort to raise beans and melons by the Aztec dry-farming system, and moved to town. There wasn't no need of working,

ONE DAY HE CAME A JUMPIN' INTO HAIL-ON-THE-HILLTOP'S CAMP, HOLLERING "SNAKE, SNAKE!"

for young Hail's check was good for two months' groceries, and Annie thought it would be more stylish to be a town dweller. Even old Hail put on a little dog, and got his blanket cut into a bath-robe with cords in front, like young Hail's.

After that, every time me and Jack Law inquired about young Hail, Gentle Annie had something new to tell. He kept writin' and sendin' checks regular, and pictures and clippings about himself, till Gentle Annie had a post-card album full of snap-shots and a cigar-box crammed with clippings.

Young Hail always was a bright lad. He learned all the ways of civilization, from bay rum to billiards, and he learned 'em quick and easy. Folks began to say he'd be a fine chap to come out and run the reservations, as he knowed both sides, but the only kind of reservation that interested young Hail was the Pullman variety, and reservations for two for supper after the show. There wasn't any manner o' doubt about his being popular with folks back there, 'specially with the females; and finally he wrote to Gentle Annie that he had picked him out a nice white squaw and was going to get married. About a month after that he sent out another batch of clippings and pictures and a visitin'-card of his bride's, which she'd had engraved "Mrs. Hail-in-the-Valley" because she thought it was a prettier-sounding name than Jenkins.

Jack Law and me, we allowed young Hail had sure done well for himself when he sucked out some bull-snake poison that wasn't there, but he had builded even better than we figured on. That fat, old benefactor of hisn, being a bachelor without any family, went where all good lawyers go, wherever that is, and left half of everything he had to Hail-in-the-Valley. Which, seeing as how he was a Pennsylvania lawyer, was considerable.

Whereupon young Hail wrote to Gentle Annie that instead of bothering to send 'em fifty or a hundred dollars every so often, he would just send 'em ten thousand all at once, so they could get a little real enjoyment out of it. And they did!

II

Hail-on-the-Hilltop never would wear anything but a bath-robe after they got that first letter from young Hail. Lately he'd been casting surrepspicious glances at a high-toned garment in Sullivan's store-window. It was a lady's garment, but old Hail, not being admitted to all the privileges of the white race, hadn't ever seen a lady wearing of 'em, and thought it was just a fancy bath-robe. Now, I knew what it was, of course, the first time I see it; because one night when Pat Reilly came home kind of late from a game of draw the door was locked, and when Mrs. Pat came to open it she had one of 'em on.

This one in Sullivan's was a scream, a regular scream of torture; all pink silk, with yellow sunflowers and blue butterflies on it, and green Chinese lizards. It had sash ends in front to tie like the cords on old Hail's bath-robe; and it was slit up the side on both sides for half a yard or more, the slits being laced loose with pink ribbon.

Search-Me Russell said it was a pin-your, but Dewey Van said he understood it was a robe-de-knew-it; old Hail-on-the-Hilltop said it was fourteen dollars, and that was more 'n he could pay, even if it was the classiest blanket anybody had ever seen since the days of Montezuma. But when young Hail sent Gentle Annie that testimonial of affection, old Hail went right over to Sullivan's and bought it. He spent the whole rest of the day struttin' around Tarantula in that cubist kimono, and just before Sullivan closed up for the night he bought some silk socks to match up with it. He had sure started in to enjoy himself.

The next day the whole bunch of 'em went shoppin'—old Hail and Gentle Annie and her four kids, Hail-in-August, Hail-in-January, Hail-and-Farewell, and Hail Columbia. Fifty or sixty dollars was all Annie needed to have a good time; shoes and candy all around, and a doll for Hail Columbia; a gold-plated wrist-watch, a percolator, a casserole, and a camisole was enough and plenty; but old Hail spent that much before he got started.

He led off with a typewriter and a second-hand adding-machine, and he stuck at them two playthings for about three days. When he had used up half a ream of paper he got tired, and intimated that he was in the market for an automobile.

There was fourteen agents on his doorstep almost immediate, trying to sell him everything from the little pacifist up to the big tractors like they use in the Kansas wheat-fields when it don't snow. But old Hail wouldn't buy. He'd sweep around in his pink silk kimono, and he'd show 'em how to operate the typewriter, and then

he'd make the tractor-man add up a row of figures on the adding-machine; and Gentle Annie would make tea for 'em in the percolator and stewed squirrel in the casserole, but they wouldn't either of 'em sign up for anything. Them equipages wasn't unique enough to suit 'em.

The tractor-man shook his head sadly.

"He's a dead one!" he says to the Ripmobile man.

The Ripmobile man didn't answer. He stuck his tongue first in his left cheek and then in his right, grabbed his hat and made for the door.

"Whither away?" says the tractor-man.

"I got to send a telegram to my brother," the Ripmobile man flings back and kept on going.

And after he had sent off his telegram he came back and sold old Hail a sprinkling-cart. Or, ruther, it was an oil-can on wheels, for it squirted oil instead of water. It arrived inside of a week, and old Hail, dressed up in his pink kimono, climbed up on the seat with the Ripmobile man and drove around town, squirting oil all over the streets. Then they went back and old Hail climbed down, and Gentle Annie took a ride, holding Hail Columbia on her lap and the other three kids spraddled over the tank part. It was just what old Hail was looking for. Like the adding-machine, it not only kept you occupied, but it gave results. For the first time in the history of the United States, Tarantula wasn't dusty; and the town didn't even have to pay for the oil.

Well, of course old Hail bought it, and it was one of the pleasantest sights in the whole county to see him dressed up in his pink blanket, taking his daughter and his four grandchildren out riding of a Sunday afternoon, oiling the roads as they went. Old Hail was sure proud of the notice that was taken of him and it.

Just a couple days after the Ripmobile agent had gone home, his brother that he had telegraphed to came up from El Paso and inquired for Hail. Jack Law directed him to Hail's place, and a little while later he went pleasure-riding with old Hail on the oil-can, a holding little Hail Columbia on his lap. And when he went back to El Paso we didn't know it, but he had old Hail's name on a contract. And a couple days later a gang of men started putting up a vault over in the cemetery for Hail-on-the-Hilltop.

There was nothing like it in the whole county. It was the whitest, shiniest thing I ever see, and it was big enough to accommodate old Hail and young Hail and all the little hailstones. When it was all finished, old Hail was so proud of it that he couldn't hardly wait to die. He used to go over there of a hot afternoon and stretch himself out on that white-marble floor and sleep, so he got some use out of it, anyhow. Then Gentle Annie took to keepin' a quarter of beef in it, too. Some of the folks around town didn't think that was just the right thing, but, speakin' practically, where would be the sense of buyin' a refrigerator when you already had a nice cool vault handy?

Well, it was a shame about Hail-on-the-Hilltop, after building himself such a nice mausoleum, but he should have knowed that he was too old to go duck-hunting. The boat tipped over on him and he got drowned, and he's there yet; and seeing as how there is caves in the floor of that lake where nobody ever has been able to sound deep enough to hit bottom, it wouldn't surprise anybody if he was to stay there.

Now that left Gentle Annie with a sepulcher and a man's-size oil-can on her hands, which would be about plenty for an average woman. But Gentle Annie being abnormal or subnormal, search me which, as Search-Me Russell says, it didn't make her flicker an eyelash. Hail-in-January was about big enough to run the car, and as for the vault, the logical thing to do with it was to live in it.

So Gentle Annie moved into it. That was her lair, and there was her pennants, and along with the four hailstones and the cook-stove, she took a dozen hens and a rooster and a pig. For where, says Gentle Annie, was the sense of paying rent when you already owned a marble hall?

Only Tarantula couldn't see it that way. There was them chickens and that pig scratchin' and rootin' all over, and them four Indian kids makin' all kinds of noises, mostly of an irreverent nature; and Gentle Annie herself washin' clothes and hangin' 'em to dry on other folks' tombstones. There was that bunch attendin' all the funerals, whether invited or not, and makin' the occasion indecorous. Just about the time the officiating clergyman would be makin' his most touching observations that pig would come squealin' through the shrubbery with little Hail Columbia on his back

and shock the mourners, maybe even start the pall-bearers to grinnin'. And just as he'd get over the interruption and start sayin' something real sentimental and comforting, you'd hear Gentle Annie hollering: "Hail-and-Farewell! No kindling split yet!" Which, of course, would bust up the buryin'.

III

PEOPLE stood it for a while, like they stands for war and winter and such conditions, trusting it's only temporary. But patience giving out at last, a meetin' of citizens was called and resolutions adopted, the sum-up of the whereases being that the Tarantula Cemetery Association was to tell Gentle Annie to vamose from those marble halls.

Jim Chase being head of the association, he wrote a polite note to Gentle Annie, intimating that sepulchers was not generally used as residences in the best circles of society, and please to vacate. Gentle Annie got Jack Law to read her the note, and went on the war-path instanter. She headed for the bank, where Jim holds out; and me and Jack followed her, Jack pretendin' he wanted to see about negotiatin' a small loan, with me as security.

IT WAS ONE OF THE PLEASANTEST SIGHTS IN THE WHOLE COUNTRY—

We found out that day where Hail-in-the-Valley got his leanings toward the law. He inherited 'em from his sister.

First off she wanted explanations. When

Jim got through explaining that she couldn't go on living in the cemetery, she told him she owned that mausoleum and had a deed to the lot it was standing on, and would Mr. Chase please read to her out of the Revised Statutes where it said a lady didn't dare to live on her own house and lot?

fenced in with a four-wire barbed fence, posts not more than so far apart; and neither the cemetery nor the burial plots therein was thus enclosed.

Jim talked about gettin' an injunction, and Gentle Annie talked

—TO SEE HIM TAKING HIS DAUGHTER AND HIS FOUR GRANDCHILDREN OUT RIDING OF A SUNDAY AFTERNOON, OILING THE ROADS AS THEY WENT

Jim ought to have knowed enough to quit right there, but he didn't. He went on to tell her that her twelve hens and rooster and pig was a trespassing on other people's property, and she was liable for damages for every begonia or gravestone they scratched up.

Gentle Annie reminded him that this was still pretty much of a grazing State and the cattlemen made the laws; and everything was considered open range unless it was

about sendin' to Washington for the Commissioner on Indian Affairs, and Jim didn't know but what she might know more about commissioners than he did about injunctions, so he let that pass.

By the time she got through, Jim wasn't sure whether Gentle Annie would permit him to be buried or not, in case he should die overnight, she was that belligerent. So he said he would look into the matter, and then Jack Law asked about making that

loan, and he said he would look into that, too, and Jack hasn't got that loan yet.

Gentle Annie went on living in the vault, and Jim went through the Revised Statutes, but couldn't find a thing to fit the case. Then he went to a lawyer, and the lawyer told him an injunction was the proper remedy, all right, and he had a clear-cut case, Gentle Annie being proved a public nuisance and a desecration and various other kinds of tort-feasor.

So that was all right till he found out that Gentle Annie had been to see him, too, and he'd told her she couldn't be budged, for the deed to the cemetery lot had nothing in it forbidding residence on it or restricting its use to any particular purpose.

Then Chase called on Gentle Annie and tried to appeal to her higher sensibilities. He told her it was indecorous to live in a tomb, but Annie allowed that she was just as decorative as anybody in Tarantula; and if it was the house he meant, why, everybody conceded it to be the principal decoration of the whole neighborhood.

So the law being a slow and uncertain, not to say deceitful, process, and Jim not being able to outargue Gentle Annie, somebody offered to play ghost and scare her out.

Just what happened he never would tell, but Gentle Annie told a Mexican woman how she'd been out diggin' dandelions just before dark and see somebody dressed up in a sheet dodgin' through, and she waited till he got close up and then she jumped and war-whooped at him, and he must 've thought it was a ghost, for he yelled and ran and fell over a tombstone, and she grabbed him by one corner of the sheet, but he jerked loose, and he ran some more, and Gentle Annie guessed maybe he might be going yet unless the customs officials had stopped him at the border.

Then the justice of the peace, which was Spencer Shellhorn, he took a little from the laws of trespass and a little from the State constitution and a little from the fish and game regulations, and pieced 'em together to make a speech; and started down to Gentle Annie's to read it at her, so's she'd think it was an indictment or something.

Spencer was top-heavy with dignity till he got within three yards of the door, and the pig came running around the corner with Hail Columbia on his back and ran between Spencer's knees, spilling Hail Columbia and the judge, too. Gentle Annie rushed to the rescue with a dish-pan, wantin' to know what he meant by assault-and-battering her youngest, not to mention annoying the pig.

When the judge finally escaped and retreated back to town with the dish-pan hangin' over his left eye, he vowed and declared that Gentle Annie could retain peaceful possession of the sepulcher and the whole darned place, as far as he was concerned, because he was going to make arrangements toward being laid away on the New Hampshire hillside where he was born at. Me and Jack Law heard him say it.

IV

Now you understand it was only the bigbugs that was making all the fuss. Us punchers didn't give a hoot where Gentle Annie lived; and as for the marble house, we thought it ought to be plenty sanitary, anyhow. So I'm glad to say that when the posse went out and throwed tomatoes at Gentle Annie, it wasn't any of *our* crowd that had to go to the doctor to get the buckshot extracted.

They kept that up all summer, but Gentle Annie stood her ground. She got so's she wouldn't speak to anybody but a few of us punchers, and when she'd be out joy-ridin' she'd never let Hail-in-January turn out or slow down for anybody. She made Jim Chase jump out of the way of that tank-car more 'n once. Me and Jack Law seen him.

Along come November elections, and darned if Ted Sullivan didn't get elected to the State Senate. So Tarantula being the home of a State Senator, the town just couldn't tolerate any more foolishness. They decided that peace by negotiation would be the best scheme; but Gentle Annie wouldn't negotiate with none of them. So they had to send for our crowd, after all.

Me and Jack Law went down to Gentle Annie's to arrange the terms of the armistice.

"Gentle Annie," says Jack, takin' Hail Columbia on his lap, "you got a fine house here—for summer."

Gentle Annie grinned. It was the first time anybody 'd ever said a good word for the vault since she started livin' in it.

"But chilly," says Jack, "very chilly, Gentle Annie, for winter; and it's coming winter, Gentle Annie."

Gentle Annie stiffened. Jack reached out and tapped her on the wrist.

"Now, Annie, now—ain't I always been a friend of yours, and old Hail's and young

Hail's and all of you? Hail Columbia, there's gum-drops in that pocket — down deep—'way down.

"Gentle Annie, listen! How about a house in town, right in town—painted yellow—six rooms, just like the postmaster's; furnace in the cellar—bay window—sewing-machine—maple floors—everything just like young Hail and his white squaw got. How about it, Gentle Annie? And a garage to keep the buggy in. Eh?"

Gentle Annie admitted that a yellow house with a furnace in the cellar might not be a bad thing—in the winter. But as for signing away the vault, she would not. She wouldn't trade it or sell it or give it away or donate it for a Pioneers' Memorial or anything. It was *her* marble house, and she was going to keep it.

"Oh, well!" says Jack. "I tell you what we'll do, Gentle Annie. We'll move it up along side the other house and you can have it for a summer kitchen!"

Now, speakin' of Indians bein' civilized and all that, is there any lady of *your* acquaintance which can brag of a marble summer kitchen, all sculptured up with cherubim and seraphim and Latin inscriptions?

Not that anybody in Tarantula cares, of course. They won *their* point. They wanted an exclusive cemetery, and although they paid a high price for it, they got it. Nobody lives there now but the dead ones.

SHE WAITED TILL HE GOT CLOSE UP AND THEN SHE JUMPED AND WAR-WHOOPED AT HIM

Father Was Right*

A COMEDY OF COMMERCE

By Henry Payson Dowst

Illustrated by Stockton Mulford

VII

LEACH CURDY, general manager of the Bosworth Press, called his secretary into the narrow cell which he had taken as his private office since his eviction from the big, comfortable room reclaimed by Hiram Bosworth.

Curdy was terribly disgruntled by the old man's return. He had had things his own way so long, and had come to believe that Hiram would continue until the end of his days to pursue the gutta-percha pill about the greensward, or to while away his declining years in some other equally appropriate occupation. And now the head of the concern was back, not only full of his old-time energy, but in a highly suspicious frame of mind.

Curdy surveyed the cramped confines of his tiny quarters and snarled to himself that it was confoundedly hard luck.

"You never can tell about those old devils," he thought. "Gee! It's tough, when I had things coming so good."

Desire Brown entered and seated herself, with her note-book ready, to take Curdy's dictation. The manager observed her with an admiring eye.

"The old man showed up yet?" he asked abruptly.

"Yes; he's been in about fifteen minutes."

"How's he feeling?"

"I don't know. He doesn't confide in me, Mr. Curdy."

"Hates you, doesn't he?"

"I guess he isn't leading any cheering when my name is mentioned."

"Well, you should care for that old fossil! He's raising a deuce of a rumpus around here—sort of a tempest in a teapot. He's sore because he's out of the running. Those old birds ought to know enough to let the younger men alone."

"I've always supposed he was a remarkably able business man," observed Desire.

"Used to be, of course; but those old-time methods don't go now. If he keeps on ramming around, he'll put this business on the bum. Too bad! Phil feels pretty sore to have his father take the high hand, after all the hard licks we've put in to keep the dividend-checks rolling his way. Phil's a nice boy; not much of a heavyweight, but hard-working and pretty able. If he'd had the knocks I've had, he'd make quite a citizen."

Desire held her peace.

"I suppose you're wise to what's going on here, aren't you? I don't imagine much escapes those pretty eyes and ears of yours."

"I don't presume to know what isn't any of my business," said Desire crisply.

"That's good. I've noticed you have a way of minding your own affairs. Well, this is your affair, as it happens. If the old man succeeds in wrecking the business, you'll be out of a job. I guess you know which side your bread is buttered on, little girl!"

A slow blush mounted to the roots of Desire's sun-streaked hair. Curdy had never taken just this tone with her before, and it made her dislike him more than ever; yet, somehow, some subtle warning told her not to snub him too abruptly.

"I want you to understand just what the situation is," went on Curdy. "You can help or you can hinder. You've a pretty good knowledge of the details of this business."

"In a superficial way, yes."

"You ought to make up your mind about where you fit. You're a valuable member

* *This story began in the November number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

of this organization, whether you know it or not."

So the man was trying flattery! Surely he wasn't doing it for nothing.

"I guess you could fill my place all right," she ventured.

"Maybe; but a man doesn't like to take on new people when the old ones are well trained and understand the business."

"I suppose not."

"Now, young lady, it's like this: Your friend, Philip—"

Desire wanted to assault her employer with almost any convenient weapon—say a good heavy paper-weight; but she only winced slightly, and maintained her self-control.

"Your friend, Philip, will be a very lucky boy if he ever succeeds to this business—provided, of course, that old pirate doesn't ruin us. This is a very fine concern, Miss Brown. It means a great deal to me personally; and, of course, it means ten times as much to Phil. I'm sure you'd be the last one to want to see him suffer."

What in the dickens could the man be driving at?

"I SUPPOSE YOU'RE WISE TO WHAT'S GOING ON HERE, AREN'T YOU? I DON'T IMAGINE MUCH ESCAPES THOSE PRETTY EYES AND EARS OF YOURS"

"It's pretty plain that the old man is playing a lone hand here," went on Leach Curdy. "And when you see so many disagreeing with him, you can be pretty sure he's wrong; but, unfortunately, he has the whip-hand. If he takes a notion,

he can dump us all out without warning, put in a new board of directors, and run the thing to suit himself."

"I should hardly expect him to do that," ventured Desire.

"No, because we're all valuable people. He could scarcely get along if we all went at once. What he will try to do is to get something on some one of us—locate the leak, as he calls it. Of course there isn't any leak; but as long as he thinks there's one, he'll keep on hunting for it, like a dog worrying at an empty rat-hole. He's sure to make us all uncomfortable, and that breaks down the morale of the house and hurts business. It destroys team-work; and if there's anything I pride myself on, Miss Brown, it is the fact that since I've managed this concern, we've had team-work."

Desire nodded slightly. She was trying not to show her distaste for Curdy and his pompous self-conceit.

"Now this is what I'm going to ask you to do. The old man objects to my having a secretary. He thinks I should dictate my stuff to any stenographer who happens to be available; and he thinks I'm putting on airs. I'm going to turn you over to Mr. Hiram Bosworth and see how it works. He's got to have some one, and you're the smartest girl in the shop. You'll please him, I know."

"You mean you're going to throw me to the lion?" suggested Desire with forced humor.

"Yes; for the good of the business."

He paused significantly.

"I don't know that I quite understand you," said Desire.

"Do I have to make myself plainer? Well, I might as well be frank. The old man doesn't like you; but he will, when he finds how efficient you are. I think you can help the business a good deal more with him than you can if you keep on in your present position; and I'll raise your pay to twenty-five a week. You have the real interest of the business at heart; act accordingly. Don't let Bosworth put anything over on us, that's all. Keep us posted—that is, Phil and me; especially me. I'm the brains of this concern just at present. When Phil gets older and has had more experience—"

Desire looked steadily into the small, mean eyes of Leach Curdy.

"I see," she said. "You want me to spy on Mr. Bosworth and inform you of his plans, if I can find out what they are—for the good of the business."

Desire's heart was beating very fast and hard. She wanted to tell Curdy just what she thought of him; she would have liked to do him some physical mischief; but, as before, she kept her poise.

"For the good of the business," repeated. Curdy.

"Of course," assented Desire Brown, "I'd do anything in the world *for the good of the business!*"

VIII

Leach Curdy and Peter Nagel, head of the Bosworth Press sales department, sat with Mr. Renfrew Meredith in the grill-room of the McAlpine Hotel and partook of nourishment.

Mr. Renfrew Meredith was a free-lance dealer in paper stock, representing several mills. He owned no warehouse, but merely had desk-room in an office on lower Broadway. If you wanted a job lot of odd sizes at a cut price, you went to Meredith. If you wanted three or four tons of coated, or some special covers, or anything out of the ordinary, Meredith would get it for you if it could be had.

Meredith sometimes acted as go-between for printers who desired to sell or buy second-hand presses, cutters, any of the paraphernalia of the graphic art. He was a handy man around the trade, a walking encyclopedia, gathering and retailing gossip, always ready to buy a lunch, or to accept one if you insisted. And he was as honest as a fox—if you don't care what you say about the fox.

Still, being a kind of peripatetic convenience for printers and paper people, big and little, he had a certain standing, even with some of the more important ones. He had a way of making a dollar easily and quickly; and if you helped him to do so he would cheerfully share it with you and pay for the drinks out of his portion of the spoils.

"That's news," he was saying, spearing a Little Neck and anointing it liberally with horseradish. "I didn't suppose the old boy would ever get into the game again. He's some go-getter, that one; wouldn't be surprised if he came back strong."

"I wish somebody had throttled him before he ever took a notion to butt in again," said Curdy vindictively. "Pete and I stood to clean up fine in a few years more—eh, Pete?"

Nagel nodded sadly and called for more butter.

"That old man can ask more pointed questions in ten minutes than any one you ever saw," went on Curdy. "He's stood me on my head half a dozen times a day, and poor Pete here is so scared he doesn't dare to come near the office at all. Of course it's easy for him, being an outside man."

"Bosworth got anything yet?" asked the paper man.

"Don't know; he's so cussed shrewd. He would have had the whole works out of me long ago, but he's playing it alone. Every one tells him that he's wrong, and that he's only butting in and gumming things up. He gets no sympathy from anybody. Even the help resent his interference, because they've seen us busy right along, and they think things are in good shape, so there's no excuse for the old man to meddle."

"I guess I'll keep away," said Meredith. "He might put me on the rack."

"Ren, if he ever lands on you you'll leak like a sieve. If you value your own hide, to say nothing of mine and Nagel's, lay off."

"What's he say about the big warehouse full of stuff you used to keep?"

"Crazy! Can't understand it. But we fixed the records fairly well; and I've been pretty liberal with Regan, the stock clerk, so Bosworth 'll have to dig a long time before he finds out what became of most of it. He thinks we've let the stock run low on account of the uncertainty of the market—that is, we think he thinks so. That's what we told him."

"I hope Regan doesn't squeal on you," said Meredith, shaking his head. "You got away with ten or twelve thousand dollars of that stock, all told."

"REN, IF HE EVER LANDS ON YOU YOU'LL LEAK LIKE A SIEVE. IF YOU VALUE YOUR OWN HIDE, TO SAY NOTHING OF MINE AND NAGEL'S, LAY OFF"

"You ought to know—you got yours out of it."

"What did you do about the Badgley catalogue?"

"Ren, we had to have that job. Nagel quoted away low, too, and Walker, Badgley's purchasing agent, threatened the old man with a lawsuit if we refused to deliver. Bosworth was wild, but rather than go into court he let the contract stand. Lord, if

he'd only have stayed away! He'll get to the bottom of that deal one of these days, I'm afraid, and if he ever finds out that Walker sweetened Pete and me a couple of thousand, it 'll be good night!"

"You boys take some awful chances, Leach. You better stick to me and be satisfied. He's got nothing on me!"

"Quit kidding, Ren. You know if Bosworth begins nosing around the mills he'll have every sheet we've bought for five years checked up, and he'll know to a hair how much it cost you, exactly what it was, and everything. I guess your dealings with the Bosworth Press are about over, boy."

"Oh, well," returned Meredith philosophically, "it was good while it lasted. We sure cleaned up on that stuff for the Simple Soap Company's premium list!"

"Yes, we did; and say, the pressmen that ran that job had to be gagged, let me tell you. The wastage was something fierce, and the imperfect books we had to cull out nearly filled a half-ton truck. I had 'em carted off to the Jersey flats and burned."

"Well, you had enough for a good big overrun."

"Sure; but think of the extra presswork! Besides, the customer howled his head off because the books he did get were so rotten. I tell you, it was much too raw, Ren; and that's another thing Bosworth will hear of some day."

"Oh, you can't tell. That was two years ago."

"We'll hope for the best; but don't, on your life, come near the Bosworth Press, because that old man 'll pry the works out of you. He's a wonder when he's on the war-path."

"How's the cute little secretary, Leach? Some queen! She can put sugar in my coffee till the cows come home."

"Fine! I've unloaded her on the old man, and he's sore. He hates her—don't know exactly why, unless it's on account of Phil."

"Is Phil soft for her?"

"Nutty; and the old man thinks the kid has wheedled Phil into swallowing everything we've served up to him."

"Aren't you afraid the girl will spill something?"

"Not a chance. She doesn't know a thing; and, besides, she's with us. That's what I had in mind when I planted her with Bosworth. She's promised to keep her eyes open and let me know which way he jumps. What cuts the old man is that he can't make Phil be good."

"Meaning—"

"That I've had the boy backed into a siding with a lofty-sounding title—manager of production—and he's so busy he hasn't time to know what's going on."

"What is he—a boob?"

"No, he's bright enough, but he's young and unsuspicious. He thinks I'm a wonder—keen executive and all that. I've kept him sold to that idea, flattered him along, and made him believe he's in on everything that happens. He doesn't know yet that he's been shelved; and he's terribly sore because the old man put the crusher on him along with the rest of us the first week he got back. Phil is hot-headed, and when his father was tactless enough to accuse him of inefficiency, he got stubborn. He insists the old man is only muddling up what is in reality a perfectly good business."

"When that boy wakes up, you'd better be a long, long way from here," suggested Meredith. "It looks to me as if you're in for some trouble."

"I wish to thunder some one would put cyanid in the old man's tea!" said Curdy maliciously.

"Unfortunately, Leach, that isn't done this season."

"Worse luck!" grumbled the general manager of the Bosworth Press. "Here, waiter, give me the check. Say, Ren, call me up in a few days, and I'll let you know how things go. I'm sort of on pins and needles; but if the little old jinx doesn't bite me too hard, I'll pull through."

"So-long, Leach; so-long, Pete. Good luck; and say—remember me to the little queen, will you?"

"I will not," said Curdy; and he and the salesman returned to Bosworth's.

IX

"I SENT for a stenographer," grumbled the old man. "I don't want to interfere with Mr. Curdy's affairs."

Desire Brown smiled a little timidly.

"I'm not doing Mr. Curdy's work any more," she explained. "He has ordered me to report to you, Mr. Bosworth. He thought you'd like some one who would give you exclusive time—and he says you're very particular. I'll do my best."

The old man glared at Desire and opened his mouth to speak. What the devil was Curdy trying to put over now?

"Any other girl would have done well enough," he said ungraciously. "I don't ask for much. My work don't seem to be of any great importance around here."

Desire said nothing, but stood in painful embarrassment, blushing a deep pink, and looking so pretty that the old man became all the more irritated. He fumbled among the papers on his desk, then swept the whole mass into a pile.

"Sit down," he said. "Don't stand and grin at me. You make me nervous!"

"SIT DOWN," HE SAID. "DON'T STAND AND GRIN AT ME. YOU MAKE ME NERVOUS!"

Desire went and sat by the side of his desk, laying her note-book on the slide. About her swirled a faint but characteristic perfume, dainty and subtile. She dropped her eyes and contemplated with outward calm the pointed toe of a very neat, high-heeled, patent-leather shoe. The old man, from behind his pile of papers, scowled at the top of her head, with its sun-kissed strands of brown, silky hair.

"Messrs. Beaman & Wilkins," he began, and Desire's pencil moved agilely across the page, "463 South Waterside Parkway, Denver—but you know the address; what's the use of my telling you? Dear sirs, I regret to say that the Bosworth Press would not care to figure on the job you submit, for several reasons. First, it is not the grade of work we desire, as all our people are high-class and would not understand how to handle cheap printing. Again, the distance to Denver is so great that the transportation would be practically prohibitive, and I do not think it would pay you to consider us. Some time when you are in the market for a strictly high-grade job, we should be pleased to hear from you. Yours truly—"

Desire thought the letter was neither courteous nor businesslike; but it was like most of the others Bosworth dictated that morning. He was in a fierce temper, and she knew what had caused it.

Around noon, when she placed the typed letters on her employer's desk, he was out at lunch. She put on her hat and went out to do an errand.

When she returned, Milly Griggs, who sat at the next desk, said:

"Lord, Miss Brown, the old gent has been hollering for you. I guess you didn't do to suit him. Better beat it in and know the worst."

Desire knocked softly on Bosworth's door.

"Come!" he exploded.

"Did you wish to dictate some more?" she asked.

"I want to know why the devil you didn't transcribe these letters like I gave

them to you, young lady. Who told you I didn't know what I wanted to say?"

"I didn't change them materially," said Desire. "Mr. Curdy liked me to make necessary changes in his diction, at my own discretion. If you'd rather I didn't—"

"Where's the rest of the letters?"

"They're all there, Mr. Bosworth."

"But I gave you enough to take you all day. I gave you enough for two girls—ordinary girls, I mean."

"The letters are all there," insisted Desire. "Do you want me to rewrite them and follow my notes exactly?"

"I CAN'T RECALL THE EXACT WORDS, BUT IT WAS SOMETHING TO THE EFFECT THAT I WAS MORE OR LESS OF AN ASS"

"We'll see. Let's get at the bottom of the thing. Follow your notes as I read one, and then explain, if you can, why you took liberties with it."

He proceeded to read the reworded letter to Beaman & Wilkins:

"We are writing for further information concerning the job of booklets on which you have asked us to figure, and enclosing samples of work done by us, for comparison. We prefer to figure on the high-grade work, as it is the kind our people are accustomed to do; and we think you would be better satisfied with a handsomer job, even at considerably greater expense. It would hardly pay you to buy the cheaper booklet so far East, owing to the cost of transportation; but if you wish us to submit dummy and estimate on something much finer, we believe you would feel that the cost of delivery would be justified. If you wish the less expensive work, probably some printer nearer home would serve you to greater advantage than ourselves."

The old man looked up.

"Words, words, words!" he said.

"Did you wish to offend Beaman & Wilkins? I supposed they would appreciate a courteous reply, even if it amounted to turning them down."

"Well," admitted Bosworth, "it don't do any harm to be polite, I suppose; but I ain't crazy about being shown how to do business by every one on the place. I don't

feel very good, and when I'm cross, I dictate short, abrupt letters. Maybe I ought to make an effort to be diplomatic, or put off writing until I'm in a better humor. I'll sign these; they're better 'n mine. I won't give you any more to-day."

Desire stood and looked at the old man, and felt a deep sympathy for him. There were those tired lines around his eyes—and he was fighting stubbornly a lone fight. Even his son seemed to have taken sides against him. She turned and went toward the door.

"Say, young woman!" said the old man, "come back here a minute. I want to talk to you."

Desire obeyed, trembling inwardly; and well she might.

"Curdy's turned you over to me, knowing I don't like you. I never did like pretty women around an office. They think more about powderin' their noses than their work. Besides—" He paused for a moment. "I've got what the young fellows call a hunch," he went on. Desire was interested. "Curdy didn't send you to do my work without some object. He wouldn't put himself to that inconvenience for an old fossil like me, *unless he was afraid of me.* He raised your pay, too. I asked the cashier."

Desire nodded.

"Now, either you can tell me, or I'll tell you, what Curdy sent you to do my work for—satisfying himself with an ordinary stenographer, and giving me the smartest one in the house."

"He sent me," said Desire, "to keep an eye on you and report to him anything you did that he might find it of advantage to know."

"Right, the very first time! Well, so much for that. I set out at first to bounce you right out; and then I thought no, maybe I'd better wait and see. Now, young woman, we understand each other. I know just how far to trust you and where to stop."

"You mean you'll be careful not to tell me anything you don't want Mr. Curdy to know?"

"Sure; you're safe, so long as I'm on my guard. Your work is good, you're smart. I get the best steno in the house, and no harm in that. Mr. Curdy's done me a good turn—two good turns. The second is, he's tipped his hand to me, though he doesn't know it. I've been trying to get the thin end of a wedge into this situation, and now I've got it. I suppose you'll go right back to Curdy and tell him all about this little talk."

"Mr. Bosworth, twice to-day I have been taken for a traitor. Mr. Curdy assumed it because I allowed him to think I consented to the arrangement; and you assume it because I have been frank enough to tell you why Mr. Curdy sent me to you. Now it must be very plain to you that no self-respecting girl is going to stand being insulted twice in one day in the same office. I didn't slap Mr. Curdy's face, because I thought I'd see how far he'd go, and I might help the Bosworth Press by keeping my temper and staying here, instead of flying off the handle and leaving. I have very little interest in your quarrel with Mr. Curdy and the other directors, and, frankly, I don't see that there is any obligation on my part to stay and be abused by both sides; so, if you please, Mr. Bosworth, I will look for a place somewhere else after this week."

"Shucks, young woman!" cried the old man irritably. "Don't try to talk in riddles. You don't tell the truth when you say you don't care which side wins. You can't fool me, even if I am an old fossil. I'm as smart as some of these young upstarts who are ruining this business. I know what side you want to see come out on top, and that's the side my pig-headed chump of a son is on. That's why you let Curdy send you here to keep tab on me; and I called the turn. You couldn't help being on their side, because you've been brought up here by Curdy, and you're crazy about Phil. So that's the dope on your situation in a nutshell. Lord, I wish it wasn't so, because, damn it, Miss Brown, I do like a smart woman, even if she is good-looking. If I'd had you three years ago, I'd have made something of you."

"If you press one of those buttons on your desk, Mr. Bosworth, would your son come here?"

"I don't know; he's so blamed obstinate, he may resent having me call him here without an engraved invitation: 'Mr. Hiram Bosworth requests the honor of Mr. Philip Bosworth's company at a reception in honor of Miss Faith-Hope-and-Charity Brown' —or whatever your name is."

The irascible Hiram jabbed viciously at one of the battery of buttons.

"We'll see," he said, and fell to fumbling among his papers.

Desire sat and did what she could to appear unconcerned—with poor success.

X

PRESENTLY Phil entered. He was plainly annoyed or resentful.

"PHIL, YOU GO OUT AND HUNT UP A JUDGE AND SWEAR OUT SOME WARRANTS"

"I'm sorry to encroach on your valuable time, Mr. Bosworth," said his father with fine sarcasm; "but I was requested to send for you by this young lady—Lord knows what for; I don't."

"Philip," said Desire, turning part way around in her chair, "will you please tell your father, as nearly as you can remember, what I told you the other day, concerning the stand you are taking against him, and with Mr. Curdy?"

"Great Scott, I don't know—let me see. I can't recall the exact words, but it was something to the effect that I was more or less of an ass, and that Curdy was pulling the wool over my eyes—oh, yes, I know! She said I was being kidded."

"Wait!" cried the old man. "Let me understand this thing. You say Miss Brown is against Curdy and the rest of you—"

"Well, you see, she has some sort of unreasoning dislike for Curdy, and I suppose it colors her opinion regarding the rest of us boys who have worked so hard to keep the organization running smooth—"

"Well, if she's got an unreasoning dislike for Curdy, what about her equally unreasoning *like* for you? Doesn't that cut any figure with her?"

"Unfortunately, dad, Miss Brown's 'like' for me isn't of the unreasoning kind. I wish to goodness it was!"

"You're lucky it isn't," said the old man. "Now, listen, Phil. I'm going to have Miss Brown stay on with the Bosworth Press. Ten minutes ago I was only too glad to accept her resignation. Two hours ago I disliked her more than any woman I ever saw. Now, by glory, I love her like—like a daughter! What are you going to do about it?"

Phil looked worried.

"I'm sorry, dad, I can't change my opinion about the business. You wouldn't want me to go back on my convictions—and you're making it mighty hard for me not to. I think you are wrong, and I think Desire is wrong. This business is all right, and Leach Curdy's management has been good. If you or any one can show me

where I'm mistaken, I'll flop over on your side of the fence so quick that it 'll make your head swim. I'd like to, anyhow, but honestly I can't! If you've anything genuine against Curdy, that's a different matter."

"You wait a couple of weeks and see," said Hiram glumly. "I've got one ally, anyhow, and I guess with a little help this young lady and the old man will pull this business out of the fire."

"Do you mean to say," suddenly asked Desire, who had turned rather pale and a little breathless from excitement, "that you really do trust me, Mr. Bosworth—and believe in me? Because, if you do—"

"You bet I do!" shouted Hiram. "I apologize for the way I've felt about you—and I need a lot of help. You, Phil, go back to your desk; and when We, Us & Co. —which is the Brown-Bosworth Syndicate, Unlimited—get ready, we'll show you a few things. Mind you come a running!"

"Wait," said Desire. "You ought to be fair with Phil; he's worked very hard, and I'm sure he's trying to do the right thing. Mr. Curdy has had the advantage of years of experience. You trusted Curdy in the past, and Phil has taken him at your valuation. It's easy enough to deceive the unsuspecting. But now, perhaps, I can tell you a few things to help clear matters up—if you'll let me."

"Go ahead and wave the magic wand," said Hiram Bosworth. "Let's see what you've got up your sleeve, young woman. I promise not to be surprised at anything you do."

"I've been poking into some things that were none of my business," said Desire with a trace of hesitation. "If you hadn't been so terribly cross to-day I'd have told you before; but when you accused me of downright treachery, I felt like washing my hands of the whole matter—though I confess I wasn't quite truthful when I said I didn't care how your affairs turned out. If I'd been a man, I'd have told you to go to the dickens!"

"I wouldn't blame you a bit," said Hiram. "I've acted pretty bad, that's a fact."

Desire's eyes were shining. She fumbled in a pocket concealed somewhere among the folds of her skirt.

"Here," she said, "are some notes I made yesterday. I went to Mr. Bangs, who is a gullible old thing. He thought he was giving me some figures for Mr. Curdy; he thinks Mr. Curdy quite a genius. Mr. Bosworth, who is Renfrew Meredith?"

Philip shook his head, but the old man cried:

"That crook! Why, he's the jackal of the paper trade! He's a sort of scavenger, a slick article—"

"You wouldn't care to have any dealings with him?"

"I wouldn't buy a pound of paper from Ren Meredith for my life!"

"You may think so; but he has supplied Bosworth Press with nearly two million pounds in the last three years."

"No, it ain't so! It can't be! Curdy wouldn't dare—he knows better! I was asking old Homer Bangs myself—kind of suspected something — and he said he'd never seen one of Meredith's bills come into the shop."

"Well, telephone the New York office of the Interoceanic Paper Company, or the Acme Card and Fiber, or the John Villiers Supply Company—you'll find they've all sold Bosworth's a whole lot of stock; and you can make them admit it was sold through Meredith and billed direct. Then there are some other people you can call up who have been buying paper from time to time, also through Meredith, that came from our storehouse—"

"Lord!" said the old man. "I was wondering why our stock-rooms weren't crowded. That sneak, Curdy! The answer's easy—why didn't I think of it before?"

"It takes time to find these things out," said Desire; "especially when every one in the place is against you, and quite a good many are actually trying to pull the wool over your eyes. Even poor old Mr. Bangs said it was just as well not to let you know that Mr. Meredith had been in the habit of coming here. He said you had an unreasoning prejudice against him; but Mr. Curdy had found, in a good many cases, that Mr. Meredith was in a position to do us favors, so he felt very friendly toward him. Up to the time you came back he was here often. I know him."

"Funny that Phil don't seem to know him, eh?"

"Probably Curdy thought it just as well not to introduce them."

"Child, you're a wonder! I've been an old chump. I see the whole thing as clear as day. Meredith's been closing all these trades for Curdy at any price that would allow him and our honest general manager

to split a nice profit on every pound. He kept his name off our books—that was easy. Between them, they've cleaned out our stock-rooms and shoved the proceeds into their own pockets. It must have taken some clever work to cover their tracks—Curdy's had every one around the place lying for him, it seems. I should have tumbled to it sooner. Think of having an innocent like you tell me what I ought to have found out for myself!"

"You can only find out things through what people tell you," said Desire. "You had to start with some one."

"Take that old reprobate, Bangs—a man I trusted fully. He should have been the first to give me the facts. Still, as you say, he's a guillible old fool, and I don't suppose Curdy's had a mite of trouble in making him think black was white. Now, Phil, you see the explanation of some of the poor work you've let get by. Nagel would bring in the business at any old price, and Curdy would buy the meanest kind of paper through Meredith, turn out rotten work, and make a small profit for the house; but Curdy and Meredith, and probably Nagel, were whacking up fat commissions."

PRESENTLY THE DOOR OPENED AND DESIRE BROWN ENTERED. "WHY, PHIL!" SHE—

The old man was silent for a minute.

"Well, children," he said, "the mischief has got to be repaired. It 'll take a long time and hard work. Little Brown-Eyes here has been clever—darned clever. She's saved the day for Bosworth's. Are you with us, Phil, or do you still want to give Curdy a chance?"

Bosworth laughed a sinister laugh, and began ringing up numbers on the telephone. Calling up several different paper houses and printers, he soon obtained evidence confirming his accusations against Messrs. Meredith, Curdy & Co.

Desire and Philip watched him, listening to his sharp, shrewd questions and readily imagining the answers he got. He rumpled his white hair, chuckled at each new revelation, swore mild but feeling oaths of satisfaction. He embodied energy, power, adroitness. Philip had never admired the old man so much.

"Now, little Brownie!" said Bosworth, at the end of a busy and fruitful hour. "You can make a pretty meaty report to the man who sent you to spy on me. Just give him the glad news of what I'm going to do. Phil, you go out and hunt up a judge and swear out some warrants—"

"Oh!" cried Desire. "How dreadful!"

"Yes, I suppose it is pretty dreadful," said the old man; "but, by George, it isn't half so dreadful as what those crooks have

—CRIED, "WHAT LUCK?"

done to the business it took me twenty-five years' hard work to build up."

But Desire was crying softly, while Phil tried very awkwardly to comfort her.

"I guess I'd better attend to the legal part of this myself," said the old man.

Seizing his hat, he left the two to straighten out their tangled skein.

XI

PHILIP BOSWORTH, sales manager of the Bosworth Press, trotted lightly up the steps of the big Bosworth Building and took the elevator to the sixth floor. Back in the old man's private office he found his father, engaged in nothing more arduous than the manufacture of smoke-rings.

"Hello, dad!" he cried. "Where's Desire?"

"I don't know—running a cylinder press, maybe. She could if she tried."

"You bet! But I've got good news, and I want you both to hear it at once. Send for her, will you?"

The elder Bosworth performed signals upon one of a series of buttons on his desk-top. Presently the door opened and Desire Brown entered.

"Why, Phil!" she cried. She crossed the room swiftly and kissed the young man—an operation which seemed to give the elder gentleman a vast deal of satisfaction. "What luck?"

"The best in the world. I've got the Appleton-Appleby Company's catalogue, two million copies, ninety-six pages and cover, with inserts in four colors. We're to do all the decorations and illustrations, plates, composition, everything from soup to nuts!"

"Too bad poor Curdy isn't here to buy your paper for you," said the old man.

"Great Scott! I forgot. It was a year ago to-day that we—I mean you—landed that chap. Well, dad, the Bosworth Press is surely on earth again. Appleton gave me his order in spite of the fact that we were the highest bidders on the list. Said it was worth the extra cost to feel that he'd get perfect books and get 'em on time."

"Salesmanship, Phil, salesmanship. Congratulations! Now you can stay home and manage the plant; I'm going off for six weeks' vacation. Besides, we need some one around here with some executive ability. I understand we're to lose our present efficient general manager."

"Why, dad, what do you mean?"

"She's going to be married—probably."

"I don't get you, dad."

"Well, Desire's our general manager, ain't she?"

"I never heard her called that; but I suppose she has as much to say as any one."

"More," said the old man. "And she's going to get married, I tell you."

Philip looked from his father to Desire, who was blushing, and back again to the amused majority stockholder in the Bosworth Press.

"If she isn't, then I must say you're a bigger chump than I ever thought you—and that's going some!"

"Father's right," said Philip suddenly, seizing both Desire's hands.

"Father always was right!" cried the old man; but he didn't see Desire and Philip exchange winks.

THE END

Old Ways Are Worst

BY ED CAHN

Illustrated by Gerald Leake

"HEY, Sid, are you posing for the movies?"

"Huh?"

"You been standing there dressed up in your new suit of clothes, registering that you are satisfied with yourself, for the last ten minutes. Wha's matter? One of them wealthy old ladies look at you like she was thinking of taking a boy to 'dopt? Or do you think just because the Weather Bureau for wunst in a blue moon deals out a good bright day, and every woman in N'Yawk puts her powder-rag in her poise and goes out for a walk, that your little shyster handkerchief sale is going to bust all records?"

Sid Heimer, buyer for Brightstein & Blumthal's ladies' neckwear, handkerchief, and veil departments, looked down from the height of his five feet nine to Mr. Levy's five feet two.

"Well, I tell you, Myron, 's funny to me that you, what is only the hosiery-buyer in this here store, should be a lot more worried about the record than what I am!"

There is no telling what Levy's retort might have been, for just then a shabby figure in spotted black clothes and a silk hat badly in need of renovating came to a halt beside them, and a cracked old voice demanded:

"Ain't it a svell day, my sons?"

"It sure is," agreed the buyers, preparing to depart.

Two talonlike hands, not noticeably clean, detained them.

"Always in a rush, you young fellers! Vait one small minute yet. *Oi,* I got for you a vonderful proposition."

"Already I got a proposition," objected Myron. "I got my work to do."

"A grand prospect I got—fine family; lovely goil wit'—"

"Seven devils and a camel!" ejaculated Sid. "You're out of date, schatchen. Nowadays a marriage-broker is a joke. Don't take up my time with such nonsense. When I want a wife—"

"Selfish one!" chided the marriage-broker. "You care nothing vat should become of a honest old man! You take the bread out of my mouth. Ain't I got to do business just like peoples wit' only stones for hearts? Listen! Only listen. The goil is—"

Mr. Levy disengaged himself.

"Excuse me, Mr. Polinsky. I got to go to the stock-room. You talk to Heimer here; he's good-looking; he's a big success, as he would tell you himself if he got a chance, and he would make some woman a fine son-in-law."

"Not so good as you, Myron," protested Sid; "but anyway we will both go to the stock-room."

They escaped, leaving the old aid to Cupid clutching his yellow-white beard and looking as if he were about to burst into a long-drawn wail of wo.

"What a noive," said Sid, "coming right into the store with that stuff! It maybe might be all right for the Ghetto, but this here is Amsterdam Avenue."

"Aw, well, he's got a right to do business," said Myron tolerantly.

"Sure I have!" answered the voice of the schatchen, and he followed them into the stock-room and closed the door. "She is a young goil—I svear it honestly, not more than eighteen. Also she is good-looking. She cooks like one of these here Frencher sheffts. She could knit; she could sing; she's took already ten lessons on that there whatchamacallum ukel-ladies. She ain't fat, and she ain't skinny—just nice; the kind of a goil which it is a pleasure to shop around to get her a bridegroom."

"Sure, sure, all that we could take your word for," said Myron, seating himself on a packing-case. "But what business is her father in, and how much dower has she?"

"Aw, cut it out," said Sid. "Mr. Polinsky is only wasting his time here. I wouldn't marry. I got my career all doped out. There ain't a wife in it for ten years yet, and then she is going to be the kind of a smart, stylish, peppy girl what don't need no schatchen to go hunting her a husband and pay him wages for his time."

"Vages? Me, I voik for no vages!" exclaimed Mr. Polinsky, greatly offended. "I voik always on a straight commission basis."

Myron Levy was interested at last.

"How do you figure that?"

"Maybe one way, and maybe the odder way." replied Polinsky secretively; "but just to show you that these here clients I got ain't shoe-stringers, I tell you I get two hundred dollars from her poppa when the marriage contract is signed and got a witnesses."

"Gee, she must be a regular sticker!"

"Sticker! Vat you mean, sticker? Like a hot cake she goes off my hands. Her poppa is a fine, generous man wit' a nice business of his own."

"SUPPOSE YOU DON'T WANT A VIFE—IS THAT A REASON? LOOK AT THE SVELL BUSINESS YOU WOULD BE GETTING"

"Two hundred is a lot of mazuma," observed Myron. "If I was you, it seems to me that I would be satisfied with half of that. What did you say her name was?"

"Do I look like a green yokel? I never said. Maybe some bright boy like you or Mr. Heimer might call on her over my head, and—" He spread out his hands in a gesture of desolation. "I got my rent to pay. I give you boys the first chanst—on account you are fine young fellers what I like to see make their way in the voild and marry

themselfs into a svell family. Now this here goil's father is a fine man; terrible charitable; goes regular to synagogue, and through the week every hour extra he is by the chevrahs, studying about them old-timers what turned out the svell line of holy books." He sighed piously. "*Oi,* if only I had more time to do that also! But all my life I gotta dig like such a steam-shovel to earn me my eatings and sleepings."

Sid, exceedingly bored, attempted to open the door, but Polinsky put his back against it.

"Only one minute. The poppa he is a small manufacturer; a good business, but it needs into it some young blood. He's got besides money in the bank, and he gives his daughter a good nadinjah. Also, extra, a fine home vit' him. He wants her to live by him for company, and not to leave the house alone when he is out. You boys could see for yourselfs it's a proposition. Suppose you don't want a vife—is that a reason? Look at the svell business you would be getting, and how you could voik it up."

"Stupenjus!" agreed Sid with his tongue in his cheek.

"Go wan, Sid, jump at it before I beat you to it," advised Myron generously.

Mr. Polinsky pushed back his sleeves and went at them with gestures, persuasion, argument, invective, figures, prophecy, and, at last, tears. Heimer refused to take the matter seriously. Levy could not be convinced, though finally he said:

"Well, Sid, I'll say the schatchen is in the wrong business; he ought to be selling hosiery on the road. You ain't considering the proposition—no kidding?"

"Soitenly not! Are you?"

"Aw, I don't know. For a nice little business what only needs young blood I might take a chanst and look the girl over. Excuse me, willya?" He took the schatchen's arm with a filial air. "I got to talk to Mr. Polinsky private."

They walked away with their heads together, while Sid, hugely disgusted, went back to his sale.

When Myron rejoined him, he said that it had been no trick at all to get rid of the marriage-broker once he had made him believe that he could marry the boss to a certain widow he had in mind.

"I thought you were interested in his proposition."

"I am—for a frien' of mine, Sid. I like my frien's to be married so I wunst in a while could get a good dinner at their houses; but for little me—well, you know the old saying, foot free and fancy loose."

"I gotcha, Myron; but just the same, women are a grand invention. Where'd us department-store guys be if they took a notion they would all die off on us? But for a ambitious boy like me, Myron, they gotta be nix."

"Still, they say it ain't good for a guy to live alone too much."

"Well, that there, Myron, is one of them sayings what you take with a dose of salts. Girls is O. K. with me. I couldn't get along without them no more 'n my meals; but a wife, Myron, is another idea entirely."

"All the same, Polinsky has got his mind made up he would dispose of his prospect to you, for second choice, since I made him believe I am engaged already. Look out he don't put one over on you, Sid. He is a foxy old *Quiller!*"

Mr. Heimer smiled in the confident manner which always irritated the little hosiery-buyer.

"I am a foxy *Quiller,* too. Nobody could put nothing over on me, soitenly not a wife; you could roll that in a cigarette-paper and smoke it!"

"That could easy be seen," rejoined Myron, and there the subject rested.

II

THEY had no more conversation until a few days later, when Sid sought out Mr. Levy, an ingratiating smile on his face.

"Listen, Myron, you need another sales-lady, don'tcha?"

"Like fun I do—why?"

"The boss just sent one to me, and she don't fit good in my departments."

"And so you want to switch her onto me? Nothing stirring. What's the matter with her?"

"Nothing. Nice little girl, but no pep; or anyway," he added hastily, "not enough to mix in with that nifty, zippy bunch of swell dressers I got. She'd do fine selling your kids' hosiery, though."

"Would she? Well, I got my own worries. Tell the old man you can't use her and let her go."

"Can't. A manager's got no rights around here when it comes to relations or friends of the boss. She knows the factory end, and wants to learn retailing."

"Is she pretty?"

"Aw, I don't know. Yes—no—she's different. Go on, take her, will you?"

"Posi-*tive*-ly not. Chase yourself now. I never ask you to take no lemons off my hands, do I?"

"You?" rejoined Sid bitterly. "You couldn't tell a peach from a lemon to start with!"

He went back to the neckwear department and looked at the disturber again.

She was almost childishly small, and very neatly but inexpensively dressed in a tan linen waist, which buttoned up to her chin, and a skirt that matched the waist in color and utility. Her black hair was brushed straight off her forehead into a plain knot at the nape of her neck, though it had managed to get into a wave or two before her stern hairpins made it prisoner. Her pale face showed not a trace of powder, and her curving lips were only faintly pink. It struck Sid that she looked like a dove among blackbirds.

He sauntered up to her counter.

"What 'd you say your name was again, miss?"

She looked up with a merry flash in her gray eyes.

"Not 'again,' Mr. Heimer; I've always been Sally Abramson."

Sid's impudent black eyes blinked.

"Excuse me that I ask you the question, Miss Abramson, but why do you do your hair so plain?"

"My people are old-fashioned, Mr. Heimer. They don't let me do it fancy; they like the old ways in everything."

She moved gracefully away to wait upon a customer.

"Just the same," pursued Sid, when she was free again, "in my departments I like good, snappy hair-dresses and frilly waists. In other words, Miss Abramson, I like pep. Them quiet ideas might be fine in the home,

SID SHOUTED SUITABLE REMARKS INTO THE BIG END, ONLY TO HAVE THEM EMERGE HOPELESSLY DISTORTED AT THE LITTLE END

but you got to have pep to make good in Brightstein & Blumthal's."

He saw her glance from one to the other of her overdressed and overpowdered fellow clerks behind the counter. She shrugged as if she pitied more than blamed them.

"I been brought up to think flyaway clothes and curling-iron waves ain't so nice or so clever for a working girl." She flushed, and the disarming pleading of a damsel half afraid of consequences came into her eyes. "I guess I sound sassy, Mr. Heimer, but honestly I'm not. Couldn't you please try me a while like I am? If I get peppy, there will be trouble at home."

Sid laughed in spite of himself.

"Far be it from me to be the cause of your headache," he said.

Sid told Myron about it that evening.

"Aw," yawned that gentleman, "forget her; she's a *dummkopf*."

"No, she ain't so *dumm*," argued Sid. "The kid might have a brain and I wouldn't be surprised."

"Well, she oughta. She's as ugly a number, they tell me, as is in the store."

"Her ugly? You ain't seen her eyes, m' boy! But she's got no dash, no zip, no snap. Her hair shines like the top of a new stove; she's got nice teeths and fine lamps with coily lashes, but she lets the whole assortment go to waste. I can't make her out."

"Look out, Sid! You might slip up and fall down in love with her."

"Believe me, I ain't no skidder, not for a second."

"Everybody skids wunst, anyway. Safety first, Sid! I think maybe I better trade you Stella Isaacs out of my department for her. O' course, Stella is a dandy saleslady, and only that you are such a friend of mine I wouldn't switch her for a absolute dud like—"

"Dud? Say, where do you get that stuff? You could keep Miss Isaacs. This girl can sell rings around her."

"Zat so? To-morrow I must give her the once-over. I never like to overlook no bets."

He did, and soon it was very noticeable how many times Myron found it necessary to be in the ladies' neckwear department, in close proximity to Sally Abramson, and how often, if speech was denied, he made use of the wireless of smiles and the eloquent telegraphy of glances.

"I see you have fell for her," gibed Sid.

"And canya blame me? Gee, she's a winner!"

"Well, Myron, what you could see in her I dunno. No pep, and always them plain brown clothes."

"Yes, but I see you hanging around her counter a lot. Also, it looks to me like she could be more stuck on you than what she is."

It was a fact, and from the moment that Sid realized it he could not get Miss Abramson out of his mind. He discovered that he objected to having Myron Levy forever loitering in his department, and finally he told him so.

"Aw, put a mask on her, if you don't want her looked at," said Myron. "A cute little number like Sally's got to have friendship. She's bad enough off working for a guy like you, without you got to take all the joy out of her life."

"You talk like you had her best interests at heart," sneered Sid. "Understan', Myron, it's none of my worries, but Miss Abramson is only young yet, and I'd hate to see her get stocked up with a sticker like you. Somebody oughta tell her you ain't no kind of a fellah to put in a frame and cover with a fly netting."

Mr. Levy smiled in an insufferably confident manner and twirled his pretty mustache.

"Go ahead, Sid! Every knock's a boost, especially with skoits!"

III

MATTERS drifted along for a week or ten days. Dreams of pale-pink lips and gray eyes with night-black lashes disturbed the rest of the neckwear-buyer. He forgot all caution and invited Miss Abramson to lunch with him.

"You told me once you are strict brought up, so we will go to a *kosher* place if you want to," he said.

"But I couldn't, Mr. Heimer," she refused. "I hardly know you a bit; but thank you just the same."

She dared to turn down her boss! Though too stunned to argue, Sid was not cured. He waylaid her one evening after work.

"Whoa, Miss Abramson—this ain't no Marathon race. Any objection to my walking this way with you?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Heimer, sure not."

"Are you going to the B. & B. employees' ball?"

" Yes. Mr. Levy's taking me. I'm getting a new dress, and I'm going in here for my fitting. G' night!"

After twenty feet in his company she was gone.

At the ball it was just as bad. Sid had only half a dance with her, in spite of all his scheming, and that only because, along toward the end of the evening, she herself suggested that Myron might divide one with him.

" You dance swell, Miss Abramson," he told her.

" Oh, Mr. Heimer, do you think so?"

" Sure! Say, why are you so cool to me at the store?"

" I didn't know I was cool."

" Ice could boil an egg beside the way you treat me."

" Aw, now! Well, if I am cool, Mr. Heimer, 'tain't because I don't like you. I do—just fine; and I think you run the department grand. But, you see, Mr. Levy he says—"

Just then the dance came to an end, and Sid never found out what Myron said. Some low-down knock, he felt sure.

So she did like him! Surprising how much better he felt after receiving that assurance. His instantly recovered vanity reminded him that the girls always fell for him; predicted that she would smile upon him henceforth, and warned him that now was the time to quit fooling and attend to his career.

But Sally's business manner remained the same; after a day or two, if anything, it was cooler.

Again the sunshine seemed to depart from Sid's days, and he was miserable. The very sight of dapper little Levy depressed him. He wondered where Sally had spent her life not to have experience enough to see that Myron was a poor risk all around. He and Myron had long ceased to be chums; and now, without a word said on either side, they took to addressing each other in monosyllables only, and eyed each other like a pair of hostile terriers. It was rumored all over the store that there was " something between " Sally Abramson and Myron Levy.

And then, one afternoon, when Myron was far down-town buying goods, and Sid was only two blocks away from Brightstein & Blumthal's on the same errand, it began to rain peltingly, with every indication of keeping it up for hours.

It was three minutes to closing-time; a circumstance which speedily tempted Sid, and he fell.

" Say, Sammis, I'll finish buying this bill to-morrow. Lend me this here bumbershoot, will you? So-long!"

He departed for Brightstein & Blumthal's on the run. He caught Sally scudding along with a newspaper spread over her precious hat and held bonnetwise under her chin. She did not see him until he swung her in under Sammis's umbrella.

" Take my arm," he commanded. " A whale of a fellah you got, Miss Abramson, to letcha get soaked!"

She laughed.

" How could I have a fellah, Mr. Heimer? I got no pep—ain't it terrible?"

" You're terrible cute!" remarked Sid, and then bit his careless tongue.

She seemed too intent upon the discovery that there was a tie-up in the subway to have heard.

" Oh, well, what of it? I can walk," she said. " We live down the avenue a little ways. I love to be out in the rain."

" Me, too," lied Sid, who hated it like a cat. " I'd like to walk from here to the Bronx just to be out in it with you and hear it banging on the 'brella."

" Maybe I ought to take a car."

" But look at 'em—packed like a barrel of anchovies right to the roofs."

Sid felt singularly happy as they started down Amsterdam Avenue. Amazing how easy it was to keep step with such a little person, and how he felt like singing!

At One Hundred and Forty-Second Street he splashed ankle-deep into the brimming gutter, and Sally laughed.

" I believe you did it on purpose," she said. " I know I was crazy to do it!"

" Gee! My shoes are full of feet."

" Yes, and water. Hear it squish! Now you'll catch a cold. Say, you better go right home and change your shoes."

" They'd be dry by the time I got there."

" Do you live very far from here?"

" Miles!" assured Sid, who even then could see his boarding-place out of the tail of his eye.

" Goodness, I'm so scared of pneumonia!" she worried, pausing at a door between a grocer's entrance and a hardware store.

The neckwear-buyer, divining that this was her abode, put on all the symptoms of a violent chill in order to be invited in.

He was. He climbed two flights of stairs and stood in a roomful of old-fashioned mahogany furniture, before a rather awful old lady in black mohair, which is the wig of the orthodox.

"My aunt, Mrs. Schwartz. Aunt Rosie, this is Mr. Heimer, the manager of my department at the store. How nice now 'cause he's my boss! I got caught in the rain, and he brought me home."

"Huh? Whazat? Who is talking?" demanded an old man, pushing aside a curtain and adjusting an ear-trumpet arrangement that reminded Sid of a frying-pan.

"It's Sally's boss, Abe!"

"So? One of Brightstein's young mens, eh? Heppy to meetcha, and much obliged you bring my girl home."

"Look at his feet! Sopping!" screamed Aunt Rosie. "Quick, Abe, take him to your room and give him socks and slippers till his shoes dry. Hurry now, I got the dinner ready. Thank Gawd there's hot chicken and noodle soup and *kartoffel pfannkuchen.* Them's the things to put a stop to a cold before it starts!"

So in ten minutes Sid was tucking his napkin into his collar.

"Believe me, this here is a treat after a boarding-house!"

"Ain't you got no home, Mr. Heimer?" asked Aunt Rosie, ladling out the soup.

"No, my folks is mostly all dead."

"Huh? Who hittum on the head?" queried the old man. "Sally, pass the company them crackers."

"It ain't a fight, Abe," Aunt Rosie corrected at the top of her voice. "It's a death."

"Debt?" puzzled Abramson.

"No, no, papa," exclaimed Sally, "you get it wrong! But never mind. Let's don't talk; let's eat."

Everybody nodded, and peace reigned for a while. Then Sid began to praise everything extravagantly, and Aunt Rosie assured him he was a terrible kidder and put him through a third degree about himself. Papa reached for his trumpet, and Sid shouted suitable remarks into the big end, only to have them emerge hopelessly distorted at the little end—which kept Aunt Rosie busily shrieking corrections of the old man's mistakes and left Sally to her own tranquil thoughts.

After dinner Aunt Rosie pressed Sid to stay, and commanded Sally to sing for him. Sid thought that if anything could cure his love-sickness, singing would; but when the last clear contralto note of a modest little song about a lazy wind had died away he realized that he was in deeper than ever.

The wise thing was to fly from danger, and he did so, rather precipitately, without saying a word about coming again.

He wondered what Levy would think when he found out about this call; and when, at the end of two days, Myron showed no signs of having found out, Sid took pains to tell him.

Whereupon the curly-headed hosiery-buyer flew into a rage, and said he wished Heimer would confine himself to the peroxid beauties so abundant in his own departments, and would let his girl alone.

"Your girl! Howdya mean yours? I don't see no solitaire on her."

"My girl," repeated Myron. "Does she have to be hung all over with signs before you believe me?" he inquired belligerently. "We're keeping it secret, and this here is strictly in confidence, understan'? Will you keep it quiet, or must I shove the notch in that there chin of yours clear through the part in your hair?"

"Puh! Don't talk like a *litvok,* Myron. Rough stuff around here won't be started by no shrimp!"

They parted, growling.

IV

NEXT day the change began. Sally acquired pep overnight. Her smooth cheeks wore a faint but suspiciously fixed flush. Her hair erupted all over her head in the most astounding puffs, knobs, plaits, and bangs. She discarded her linen waist, and appeared in a cherry georgette of extravagant cut. Her sensible shoes gave way to stagy slippers with outrageous heels, and her skirt could only be described as killing. Her manner changed, too; she laughed more and not so softly. The peroxid and henna beauties seemed about to welcome her into their fold—all of which made Myron Levy grin proudly and Sid Heimer gnash his teeth in helpless rage.

"Gee!" said Myron. "Remember that crazy old schatchen, Sid? What if I'd listened to him?"

"You ain't got sense enough," remarked Sid sourly. "It's nothing to me, of course, but she looks fierce in them vamp earrings."

"Fierce swell, you mean. Last night I told her I liked earrings on a girl, and to-

"THE VAY TO GET A COUPLA YOUNG PEOPLES TOGEDDER IS TO FOIST CHASE 'EM APART"

day she wears 'em. That's the way I train her. She'll do anything to please me!"

Sid walked away, sick with indignation and with another feeling that he would not acknowledge.

That evening he decided to call upon Sally for a brotherly chat; to warn her about accepting Myron too readily. Just as he approached the entrance of the flat where she lived, Mr. Levy came out, twirling his cane.

"Hello, Sid!" he called in tones that would have made the fortune of a fish-pedler. "I ain't so stuck on seeing you in this *naberschaft*. You ain't got your eye on my girl, have you?"

"You seem scared you would lose her."

"Anyway, I'm not afraid of you. She's got no use for you. She told me so herself just now. She says you're so unreasonable and fussy to work for she is going to get transferred into my department."

"'S funny!" said Sid hotly. "'S funny you two don't get married!"

"Aw, lots of time. Ain't got a cigarette, have you, Sid?"

"Naw!"

"Ta-ta, then," and Myron took himself off with the swagger of a man who is a devil with the ladies and knows it.

Sid made a feint of departing in the other direction, but was ringing the Abramsons' door-bell inside of five minutes. A sign on the speaking-tube announced that it was out of order, but the latch clicked, and Sid went in and up the stairs.

Sally opened the door.

"Why, what a surprise! Papa and Aunt Rosie are out with a old friend of theirs, but come in. They'll be back soon, and we will all have coffee together."

Sid's wrath mounted.

"So you see that there kike alone, do you? Say, don't you know that he is no kind of a guy for you to be so pally with? He don't no more mean straight business than a corkscrew does!"

"Don't you call him a kike!"

"He is a kike—the kikiest kind!" The lady's eyes flashed. "I heard you said I was fussy to work for. I want to know when I was fussy with you. I want to know what right you got to say I'm so unreasonable that you got to leave my department. And furthermore I want to know why you all of a sudden change yourself from a nice-brought-up, quiet-dressed little thing, what it used to rest a guy's eyes to look at, to somebody what looks like a cross between a vampire and a angel with a jag on. I want to know the reason. And now you answer me, quick!"

The fire died out of the gray eyes.

"What do you care, Mr. Heimer?"

"I hate to be talked about, especially when it is a unjustice," Sid answered rather lamely.

"I didn't say any of it. And about the clothes"—she blushed and hung her head—"I was just trying to please—"

"That scrubby little kike!"

"Don't you call Myron a kike!"

"You call him his first name!" Desolation and despair seized upon Sid's soul and sounded in his voice.

"Of course; but I haven't dressed myself like the whole Pep family for him."

"You ain't?"

She smiled archly.

"No; I got a manager what told me himself he liked pep, and because I usta think jazz clothes was only for jazzers, I wouldn't. But, anyway, after you never called again, I thought maybe a girl could be too sensible, and I—"

"Sally! You cared because I never called again?"

She nodded, eyes starry with tears.

"Would you be mad if I told you I'm crazy about you—if I want you to call me Sid?"

"Not if you meant it I wouldn't."

"Sally, do you like me a little, too?"

"Packs," admitted Sally as he gathered her into his arms and stooped for his first kiss.

"There's no use talking—I love you, and you got to be my wife!"

"All right, Sid! I love you, too, and ever since that rainy time I haven't cared how many terrible things Myron Levy said about you."

"What's a loafer like him got to do with us, anyway?"

"Nothing, but relations always got to meddle."

"A relation?"

"Didn't you know he is my cousin?"

Before Sid could answer they heard the noise of arrivals, and in another moment her father smiled in at them. There was another figure in the background, but Sid was too happy to notice.

"Do me the favor, Mr. Abramson, and gimme Sally for my wife," he shouted into the tin trumpet.

"Well, I see about it, maybe."

"You could look me up," yelled Sid. "I got references."

The old man waved his hand.

"Already the schatchen told me all about you. I got you looked up. It's all right."

"Schatchen?" exclaimed the astonished lovers.

"Sure!" spoke up a familiar figure in the background, coming forward with a broad, triumphant smile. "I got to do business, too, ain't I?" He shook the astounded Sid's limp hand. "*Mazeltov*, you got a fine goil, Mr. Heimer."

"Gee, Mr. Polinsky, why didn't you tell me it was her?"

Old man Polinsky spread out his hands.

"Listen, the vay to get a coupla young peoples togedder is to foist chase 'em apart."

Sally shook her finger at him.

"I didn't want a husband from a broker!"

"Maybe he would let you retoin him for credit, then?"

"No chance! There's no exchange privileges on me."

Polinsky turned to Abramson.

"It looks like you owe me two hundred dollars' commission, Abe."

"Yes. But we are old friends together; make it a little cheaper, hey, Polinsky?"

"I vish I could," said the marriage-broker, "but I got to split it vit Myron Levy, like I promised him I vould that day I seen Heimer in the store. He vouldn't let me off from *oser* a nickel, because he has to buy a vedding-present, and also he's got a right to make a little something for himself, on account how hard he voiked to put over the deal."

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The Mark of Cain

WHO CAN SOLVE THIS MENAGERIE MYSTERY?

By Charles B. Stilson

Illustrated by Paul Stahr

"G-LANG, there, Peanuts, yuh hard-boiled egg! S'pose we got all day to do this in? G-lang!"

Peanuts, a small white horse, very ancient and very wise, laid back both ears, rolled his eyes, snorted, humped his bony spine a bit, and pounded hard with his hoofs on the turnpike.

All that demonstration was supposed by Peanuts, and by him alone, to register furious speed; but, considering that it did not get him along the road one whit faster than before, it was not extremely convincing, even to him. The only one at all impressed by the antics was Spink, a grizzled terrier, which habitually trotted along almost directly underneath the horse's bobbing nose.

Had Peanuts repeated his ruse a score of times in a day, it never would have failed to alarm the nervous Spink. At the first snort, the terrier sprinted forward desperately, his tail so close-reefed to his fat little hind quarters that he seemed mysteriously to have lost it.

Behind Peanuts rattled, clattered, and banged a squatty, covered cart, painted yellow, which bore in red lettering upon sides and back the legend:

WILL SAMPSON
MILK, CREAM & BELGIAN HARES
PATENTON, N. Y.

Will himself—usually he was called Sam—held the reins and did such talking as he found necessary to keep Peanuts in motion. Will, or Sam, was a plump, young chap, buttoned up to his prominent Adam's apple in blue overalls, above the bib of which was to be seen a ruddy face, planted with a long nose and speculative gray eyes.

It was wearing toward five o'clock of a

AS THE POLICEMAN GAZED IN, THE ANIMAL RAISED ITS HEAD AND STARED FIXEDLY AT THE GATE

pleasant August morning. Within ear-shot of the pike the roosters in a dozen henneries were calling the sun; and the sun was coming. Sampson had overslept, was nearly an hour late, and was more than usually urgent in his appeals to Peanuts to "git a wiggle on," and take the outfit into Dorchester in time so that customers on the fag-end of his route might not have to breakfast with creamless coffee. Several times Sam descended to the meanness of rattling a stubby whip in its socket, a species of bluffing which Peanuts despised heartily, but sometimes responded to. He had never, it is true, known that whip to be drawn; but then, one could not tell.

To the left of the white turnpike road was an apple orchard of many acres. To the right was an almost equally extensive field of early cabbages, their green and purple leaves shining with dewdrops like the bejeweled turbans of so many Oriental warriors coming up in ranks from the ground.

Beyond the field and the orchard, and at right angles to the pike, was a dirt-and-cinder road; and beyond the road the pike quit being a pike and became a macadam pavement; for the crossroad was the city line which divided Dorchester from Patenton.

"There, gorram it! We're in the city now, Peanuts," said Sampson as the cart-wheels began to grate and grind on the stones. "Show 'em that you're worth your shucks. G-lang!"

Peanuts was nothing loath. The macadam sloped downward; the troublesome cart pushed hard at the old horse's heels; it was easier to go faster than it was to hold back. Peanuts broke into a clumsy imitation of a gallop which would have made a

colt laugh. *Ga-whallock! Ga-whallock!* clattered his hoofs on the macadam. Behind him the cart bounced and bumped, and the milk-cans danced and jounced tipsily, to the accompaniment of a melody as fearful as that of a jazz band in full cry.

"*Who-a,* there, Peanuts!" Sampson presently commanded his fiery steed.

They had been progressing between the vacant, bill-boarded lots of a newly plotted real-estate section. They drew up before the first building which one met when one entered the city by way of Spruce Street.

Just what kind of a building it was was not apparent

WITH HIS PISTOL-ARM RESTED FIRMLY ON THE UNOPENED LEAF OF THE DOOR THE PATROLMAN EMPTIED THE CHAMBERS OF THE WEAPON

from the outside. All that was to be seen was a high brick wall, which extended back to the depth of the lot, and paralleled the street, nearly flush with the sidewalk, for a distance of a hundred odd feet. Originally the wall had been planned by an architect to enclose the headquarters and supply depot of a flourishing contractor. The façade was decorative, and had been pierced at intervals with small windows. But a later owner had walled up the windows, and with entire disregard for decorations, had added six feet of plain, unpainted brickwork to the original fifteen of the wall. More than that, he had garnished the top of the structure for its entire extent with a fringe of iron bars, set at six-inch intervals in the masonry. The bars were pointed at their tips, and they curved inward and downward.

Thus blanked and blinded, the wall had become a monstrosity which frowned down into Spruce Street with dead eye-sockets in an unpleasant, not to say sinister, manner.

Immediately the hoofs of the horse had clattered to a stop, began a performance which was of daily recurrence.

Peanuts, with bristling mane and sniffing nostrils, edged across the street, and did not halt until the wheels of the milk-cart brought up against the curbing. Spink, who had no cart to hamper his movements, hopped the curb, crossed the walk beyond, and sat him down in the covert of a clump of weeds. Like the horse, the terrier sniffed uneasily, and the stiff hair at his neck stood up angrily.

Both dog and horse looked askance at a gate in the wall, which their master prepared to approach, as though they feared that it might open and give issue to some frightful enemy. Peanuts turned his white old head and gazed at the gate open-eyed. Spink peered at it furtively from between the stems of the weeds where he squatted.

Sampson, who had grown used to their actions, only grinned.

"Gorram it! I think it stinks worse this mornin' than usual," he grumbled, wrinkling his own nostrils disgustedly. He had reason. For many feet around the neighborhood of the wall the air was heavy with an acrid, sour, penetrating odor, which was anything but alluring.

With a wire basket full of bottles, the milkman left the side of his cart and started to cross the street toward the gate.

As he passed near Peanuts, that wise and privileged character stretched forth his head, and with his long, crooked teeth, laid hold of the folds of Sampson's rolled-up shirt-sleeve from behind. With gentle nip and tug, it seemed almost that the old horse was trying to hold its master back from a rash venture, whereof the animal knew the perils.

"Leggo, Peanuts! Dum it, you'll tear my shirt!" expostulated Sampson, shaking himself free and going on in the direction of the gate.

In itself, the gate was peculiar. It, too, had been tampered with. It had been, and still was, constructed of two strong leaves, which met and closed solidly in the middle of an arch in the masonry. The arch was ten feet across, and at its zenith was nearly a dozen feet in height. The gate, when closed, filled it completely. Strongly as the gate had been constructed, some one had seen fit to make it still more strong by the reenforcement of steel braces, which were bolted on at intervals, horizontal to the timbers.

Another feature of this portal, which would have done credit to the mansion of a feudal lord, was a narrow door which had been let into the right-hand leaf of the gate, and which was no less strong in construction than the work of which it was a part. The door opened inward, and was in two sections, upper and lower. In order to gain ingress through this postern, it was necessary to push back the bolt of a heavy lock in the top half of the door, which in turn set free the lower section.

Sampson, who delivered milk at this place on seven mornings of each week, had been furnished a key to the door. As he crossed the pavement, he felt in a pocket of his overalls and produced the key.

He was about to insert it in the lock when, somewhere in the buildings beyond the wall, began a noise that was like the growling of a large and sullen dog, but which was prolonged into a rumbling, air-shaking roar of a depth and volume far beyond the powers of any canine throat.

As the roaring ceased, and its echoes were dying away, it was answered by a horrid screech of startling shrillness and intensity that seemed to proceed from very near the gate. It cut the air like the single sharp crack of a whip, and left no echoes.

Peanuts, who had lowered his head and trembled at the first sound, started and shied so violently at the second that he

nearly upset the cart over the curbing. The disturbed milk-cans staggered and jangled. Spink quit his retreat in the weeds with a yelp of terror, cast a hurried glance about him for a safe place to run to, and, as he could not climb a telephone-pole, decided on the cart. Into that shelter the terrier scrambled, clawing and whining, clambered over the seat, and crowded in among the cans, where he crouched down and became silent as the grave.

Sampson's hand shook so that the key rattled in the lock. He hesitated to turn it.

"Gorramity! I never heard one of 'em squall like *that* before!" he exclaimed. "The chap that let that yell out of him must be hungry this morning."

With a smile at his own nervousness, and a reassuring word called over his shoulder to Peanuts, who was shivering so that the harness jingled, the young milkman twisted the shank of the key, and the bolt shot back in the lock. He pushed the upper half of the door inward a few inches with his elbow, bunted the lower section with his knee, stooped and thrust a leg over the low threshold. The lower leaf of the door, swinging open, disclosed a patch of stone pavement.

The upper portion of Sampson's body was half-way through the aperture when he stopped with a convulsive jerk and became strained and rigid, as if he had come in contact with a live wire and was receiving the full force of a powerful current.

For an instant only the paralysis lasted. The wire basket fell with a crash of breaking bottles on the stones inside. The man emerged hastily, his ruddy countenance paled and sweating, and his eyes popping in their sockets. Behind him he slammed successively the two sections of the door. Leaving them on the latch, and the key sticking in the lock, he ran across the street and sprang into his cart.

II

He had no voice to urge his horse. To the vast consternation of Peanuts, the stubby whip that he had despised left its place and descended across his ancient and easy-going hams with a resounding thwack that sent him careering down Spruce Street at a pace which he had not made in years. Above the clamor of agitated tinware rose the incessant cracks of the whip and the shrill yelps of the imprisoned Spink, as the jigging milk-cans trod on his toes.

For nearly a quarter-mile Sampson continued to ply the whip on the scandalized horse. As he neared the corner of Ames Street, where the city proper began, with its rows of orderly houses and yards, he saw a capped and blue-clad figure on the sidewalk ahead of him, which swung a club nonchalantly and whistled as it marched. Sam hauled hard on the reins.

"C-Clancy!" he stammered; "oh, C-Clancy!" He was as much out of breath as was the panting Peanuts.

"This ain't Clancy," responded the patrolman, coming leisurely to the curb. "This is Bill's night off. I'm Carney. What's the row? The rate you come down the street, your cream must be all churned." Carney grinned. Catching a nearer view of the milkman's scared face, however, he turned serious and tightened his grip on his locust. "What's up?" he asked shortly.

Sam gaped like a newly landed trout. "A—a—tiger!" he choked out at length. "It's killed a man back there! I seen it!"

"Tiger!" echoed Carney contemptuously. "Say, either you got something stronger 'n milk in them cans, or it was a blind tiger you seen. What you—"

From the distance in Spruce Street came again that sharp, blood-chilling screech. The sound of it wiped the words from Carney's lips. He stared stupidly at Sampson.

"That — that's it!" gasped Sam. "It hollered once just like that before I opened the door. It's in where it can't get out, though. It was squattin' on a man!"

"Gawd!" said Carney.

He turned and beat a quick tattoo on the walk with his night-stick. Then he leaped on the step of the milk-wagon.

"Turn around and drive back!" he commanded. "Go to beat hell!" For Tim Carney was not a toy policeman.

Before the gate in the wall the patrolman paused for a moment only, to question Sampson as to the lay of the buildings within, and where the danger was to be looked for.

"Right in front of you—center of the yard," replied Sam, and cautiously stood to one side.

Carney laid down his club, took his service revolver from his hip, and pushed open the upper leaf of the postern door.

Buildings, low, and constructed of both brick and wood, some of them mere sheds, surrounded three sides of a courtyard that

was some forty feet square. The gate faced the center of it.

Twenty feet from the muzzle of the patrolman's revolver, a man with wide-flung arms and face turned up to the dawning sky lay on the stones.

Crouched at the head of the prostrate man, its lowered snout hiding his face, was a long, tawny animal of the cat species. It was not the tiger the milkman had called it; nor was it like any beast Carney ever had seen in circus menageries. It was marked on its back and sides with numerous spots of black, which contrasted sharply with their tan background. Its belly was nearly white. Its body, something more than a yard in length, was more lithe and less powerfully framed than that of a tiger, and its fur was rougher and more tufted than a leopard's. Its tail, which it kept in continual, switching motion, was long and somewhat bushy at the tip.

As the policeman gazed in, and Sampson struggled to muster the courage to peek over his shoulder, the animal raised its head and stared fixedly at the gate. In the half light, its large eyes glowed like those of a mousing cat. Carney steadied his hand to take aim. He drew a bead on the dark space between the gleaming eyes, and was about to press the trigger, when the brute tossed its muzzle skyward, and for the third time emitted its harsh, echoless cry.

Carney, aiming just below the white triangle of the throat, fired.

Simultaneous with the flash of the revolver in the morning dusk, the huge cat leaped the height of a tall man from the pavement, and with an appalling shriek, fell back, kicking and spitting, at some distance from the body over which it had crouched.

With his pistol-arm rested firmly on the unopened leaf of the door, the patrolman emptied the chambers of the weapon. At the last small-arms practise of the Dorchester force, Carney had made a perfect score with ten shots, offhand, at a distance of fifty feet. At less than half that distance every bullet struck the writhing, squalling heap of tawny fur at which he aimed. After the fourth shot the beast ceased to struggle, and its strident voice was stilled. From one of the buildings to the right the sullen roaring which Sampson had heard earlier broke out anew and echoed the reports of the revolver.

"Big-game hunting in the wilds of Dorchester," remarked Carney grimly; and of Sampson he asked: "What t'ell kind of place is this, anyhow? I never heard of it."

"Wild-animal trainer's," replied the milkman. "I been deliverin' here for six months. It was a contractor's yard before that."

Methodically the policeman reloaded his revolver; and then, seeing no more beasts, he pushed open the door and entered the courtyard. Sampson remained by the gate.

As he passed the carcass of the big cat, Carney stirred it with the tip of his shoe. It was limp and harmless.

One glance into the wide-open eyes of the man who lay upon the stones convinced the patrolman that he was dead; but he felt at the pulse to make sure. No flutter of life responded to his fingers, though the corpse was still warm.

The body was that of a short, slight man of about forty-five years. His bushy hair was blue-black, as were his mustache and shaggy brows. The staring eyes were pale-blue. Plain rings of gold ornamented his ear-lobes, and a number of jewels of value glittered on his fingers. Face, throat, and hands were bedabbled and spattered with blood; and a stream of it had trickled across the flagging to a depressed spot, where it formed a pool into which the life-fluid of Carney's late target was seeping also. The body was dressed in brown velveteen coat and trousers, no vest, and an artist's Windsor tie. Near one of the outstretched hands lay a short, heavy-stocked whip with flexible lash of braided thongs.

"Guess he cracked it once too often," said Carney.

The policeman then went out to meet Acton and Lumsey, who had responded to the summons of his night-stick and gun, and came running down Spruce Street with their weapons drawn. Explaining the circumstances to them, Carney departed to find a telephone.

Sampson bethought himself of his waiting customers, and after giving his name and address to Lumsey, clattered away upon his route.

When the telephone-bell rang in the captain's room in Dorchester police headquarters, and Carney poured his tale over the wire, Detective Captain Scott Makris was idling at the night lieutenant's desk. "It

was an unusual hour for Makris to be there, unless called out on a case; but it was the good old summer-time, and a bundle of fishing-rods and a creel which lay on the floor by the desk sufficiently explained his presence.

He had come over from his hotel to pick up Detective Hilfer and Police Sergeant Ernesti, with whom the captain had an engagement which boded no good to the black-gills of Long Pond. For these three skilled man-hunters were no less adept and enthusiastic fishermen. They often put in a few of the early hours at the ponds a few miles northwest of the city, going down in Makris's car as soon as Ernesti, who was on night duty, was relieved.

Ernesti, with a reproachful glance at the wall-clock, took Carney's report. Makris leaned against the desk and watched the notes which the quick, brown fingers scrawled on the desk-pad.

"Why, that's Tony Torelli!" the captain exclaimed, with concern in his tones, as Ernesti ceased writing, and hung up. "You know him, Ernesti. He's been established in Spruce Street since he came here from St. Louis a half-year ago."

The sergeant nodded.

"Yes; Tony's got his at last; most of 'em do, sooner or later, in his business. Wonder how it happened. Carney says he's shot something—he don't know what."

"We'll stop and see on the way down," responded Makris. "It's only a block off our way. I'm sorry about Tony. He was one of the best animal-trainers in the business; trained for vaudeville acts and circuses—all the way from fleas to elephants. Come to think of it, he'd promised me to educate a brace of police dogs for the force, too. Here's where we lose. Damn whatever it was that Carney shot! Here comes Hilfer; and the clock says that we're off."

With the last stroke of five the attenuated figure of the Swiss detective came in from the hall. He was smothering a yawn with the back of his bony hand, and his blue eyes looked sleepy; but he was on time to the minute.

"Goot morning, captain," he greeted Makris, and to the sergeant, with a grin: "Veli, what would you rather do than go feeshin', Ernesdi?"

He set fire to a drooping stogy.

At the postern door of Torelli's courtyard, Makris rubbed elbows with a wide-shouldered man who was scorching his stubby, black mustache with the coal of a stubby, black cigar. He was Jim Arnold, the Dorchester coroner.

"Will I ever beat you to a case, Makris?" he grumbled in a bass voice. "Damfino when you ever take your forty winks."

"Just an accident this time, Jim. We're going fishing."

"The nerve of you!" groaned Arnold jealously. "Black-gills runnin', too."

The two stepped through the door, followed by Hilfer and Ernesti.

"Yes; it's Torelli, right enough," said Makris, bending over the fallen trainer of beasts. "Gad, how the big cat did smear him up!"

"Dead as a hammer," pronounced Arnold, feeling of Torelli's wrists and temples. He wiped his fingers on the dead man's sleeve, took out his pad and began an inspection of the surroundings.

Hilfer in turn bent over the corpse, bent closer than had the others, and reached long fingers under the dead Torelli's shoulder.

"I don'd theenk we catch some black-kills thees morning, captain," he drawled softly, and drew back his hand. In it was a long and slender object that glittered brightly in spots, and in spots was stained to dulness.

"Huh! What's that?" Arnold was at the detective's elbow in an instant. "Knife, eh? Turn him over."

Ernesti stooped and twisted his countryman to rest upon his face.

The sergeant's olive skin paled a bit, and he cast a quick glance around the slowly lighting court.

"Stabbed!"

III

Two inches below and back from Torelli's left ear was a clean, gaping wound, where a knife-blade, strongly urged from behind, had bitten deep into the neck, severing muscles and arteries.

"That was enough," said Arnold, after an examination had disclosed no other wound upon the man. "A strong arm drove that dagger home."

"Eet iss an odd knife, yes," remarked Hilfer, handling it gingerly by the blade; "he iss made all in one piece."

"Anything like a finger-print on it?" questioned Makris, producing his magnifying lens.

"Blenty of them." Hilfer held the weapon under the glass. "They are hardly dry."

"So it wasn't the leopard thing that killed him?" asked Carney, who had come up from the gate.

"No, Carney—it's murder," replied the captain. He stepped over where the animal lay crumpled, and bent his hawk's face above it. In the excitement of Hilfer's discovery no one but Carney had thought of the beast.

DIPPING HIS FINGERS IN THE BLOOD WHICH HAD FLOWED FREELY ON THE STONES OF THE YARD, HE SIGNED A CROSS AGAINST THE SKY, CALLING OUT WILDLY IN SICILIAN

"What is the thing, captain?" the patrolman queried.

"It's a chetah, a panther that the Hindus tame and use for hunting small game in India. They are tamed easily. This one followed Torelli about like a dog. I'm sorry you had to kill it, Carney. It probably was mourning over its dead master when you shot it. But of course you could not have known that; and you did just the right thing."

Silence for a long moment. The five men glanced from the still body with its accusing wound to the silent stretch of walls and buildings.

"The body was warm when it was found," Makris reflected aloud. "It is still warm." He raised his voice: "Coroner, how long has the man been dead, do you think?"

"HE'S SWEARING A VENDETTA AGAINST THE MAN WHO KILLED TORELLI," REPLIED ERNESTI

"Not more than an hour."

"The milkman found the door locked, you said, Carney?" questioned the captain.

"Yes, sir."

"Is there any other way into the place?"

"No; Acton's made the rounds outside. Wall's the same height all the way around, and it's all spiked like it is here. There ain't any ladder to be found, either, or any marks of one. Acton looked."

" Good work. Then some one had a key; or—he's still inside the wall."

Again the five stared suspiciously at the buildings which enclosed the gloomy quadrangle.

" Strange that all the rumpus hasn't fetched anybody out," continued Makris. " You haven't seen any one, Carney?"

" No, sir; nor heard anything, except some monkeys, and a damned lion that has let off his yawp two or three times. I didn't have the nerve to go in, cap, an' tell the man's wife, if he's got one, that he was lyin' dead outside here." Thus spoke the man who had coolly faced and shot the chetah.

Hilfer had been busy beside the corpse with the magnifying-glass and a number of narrow strips of glazed paper.

" The finger-brints on the knife, captain," he interjected mildly, " they are those of Dorelli himself. He—"

" 'Tain't suicide!" interrupted Arnold, with a decided snap in his tones. " He couldn't have reached around with the knife to jab himself from the direction that blow came; and he'd have had to be a Hercules to have jabbed it so deep, allowin' that he could have made the reach — which he couldn't."

" I theenk he make the brints when he feel the knife and pull him out," resumed Hilfer imperturbably. " If there were other brints on it, he haf covered them up." The veteran detective took off his felt hat and ran long fingers through the stubby tuft of hair which stood up from his high forehead.

Makris reached a hand for the dagger.

It had been forged from one straight piece of steel. Not heavy for the length of it, the weapon was balanced delicately, with the preponderance of weight in the blade, which was double-edged. The point was needle-sharp; and for about two inches back from it both edges were like a razor. The hilt was round and smooth, and tapered slightly. Between it and the blade was a rounded guard-ridge, scarcely a quarter of an inch high.

" It *is* an odd knife," said Makris. " I never saw one like it."

" Beg pardon, captain; but I think you have," Ernesti spoke up. " You have forgotten. Remember the strong woman and knife-thrower who was with Bingum's Circus a few years ago? La Saetta, she called herself in the profesh, which means 'the Arrow.' Don't you remember?"

" Yes; I saw her performance once."

" Well, she used this sort of knife for her tricks—a whole flock of 'em. Torelli married her."

Coroner Arnold whistled.

" Sounds interestin'," he commented; " but then, 'most any one might 'a' used the knife."

Makris had not ceased to run his eyes over the low buildings which bordered three sides of the court. At this moment he saw a light spring up in two windows nearly opposite the gate.

" Some one rousing—at last," he said. " Ernesti, you, with Hilfer, Lumsey, and Acton, make the rounds of the buildings, with the exception of the living-rooms over here, if that is what they are. I'll take care of them. Carney, you watch the gate."

In a couple of moments the searching party of four was tramping on its way. Makris turned his steps toward the lighted windows. As he went, the roaring challenge of the hidden lion echoed across the square like summer thunder.

" Cheerful place, cap!" Carney called from his post by the gateway.

Makris grinned. At his right, he noticed a row of barred cages or dens, the floors of which were nearly on a level with his chest; and he fancied that he could discern in them dim outlines of skulking forms that watched him. Cheerful place, indeed! He stepped upon a porch and knocked at a door between the two windows.

Within sounded a heavy, padding tread, as of one walking barefooted. The door was opened.

As the detective recalled her—and his memory was not at fault—La Saetta, in the spangles and tights of the circus arena, had been a large woman; but memory had not prepared him for the sight of such a giantess as stood before him. With the four-inch advantage of the threshold, she overtopped him by head, shoulders, and something to spare; and he was nearly six feet tall.

" What do you want?" The voice was like a man's barytone. There was in it no trace of the foreign accent which Makris had rather expected to hear.

" You are Mme. Torelli?"

" Yes." She looked over his head to where the coroner stood making notes in the courtyard; and she saw the sentinel figure of Carney on post by the gate. " What is wrong out there?"

Before he could answer, she noticed that he was holding one hand pressed flat against

his leg. He still held the dagger, and was hiding it from her.

"What you got there?" She recoiled from him a half-step, and raised a threatening arm, fist clenched and ready as that of a pugilist. "Don't try any tricks with me, young man! I could break you like an egg!"

Makris believed her.

"I am Detective Captain Makris," he replied. "I knew your husband slightly. He has met with an accident. He—"

But she had caught the past tense which Makris had let slip.

"He's dead," she interrupted. "Come in, please." She stood to one side composedly, motioning to him to enter.

The room was not large. By reason, perhaps, of the size of its occupant, it seemed smaller than it really was. In its center was a table; a low buffet stood against the side wall; a baby-grand piano was near one of the windows; and, opposite the door, a large, flat chest leaned against the wall. Its cover of carved and gilded wood bore the name, "La Saetta," outlined conspicuously in brass studs, each of which was set with an imitation turquoise the size of a silver quarter. Besides the piano-stool, there were a wide, tapestried rocker, and a straight-backed dining-chair which stood at the table.

Mme. Torelli pointed Makris to the rocker. Bending over the table, she hastily flipped the toasting-grate from a small combination electric stove, and spilled half a slice of badly scorched bread upon the table-cloth. The remainder of the slice lay by a plate which contained an orange and an egg. Makris, whose business was noticing things, wondered at such a delicate appetite sustaining such a vast bulk.

La Saetta had put on flesh since leaving the arena—one might have said vulgarly that she had laid it on. When she sat on the dining-chair, she overflowed it, and it creaked under her. The hand with which she gathered a voluminous pale-blue dressing-gown about her was creased and puffed like something molded of tinted dough.

Despite these handicaps, the woman was still good-looking, in a chubby, infantile way; her brown eyes glinted with honest humor; and such character landmarks as the fat had not effaced from her countenance agreed with the eyes.

"So Torelli is dead." The words were spoken slowly, and without more inflection than might have been expected had she remarked that frogs' legs are very good eating if they are well cooked. She picked up a silver table-knife and scraped the burned particles from her toast, after which she continued to turn the knife in her fingers. "Which one of 'em did it?" she inquired. Always the same mountainous composure.

"Which one of who?" Figuratively, Makris pricked up his ears.

"The cats. I'll bet it was the lion. He was the worst; though I never trusted the chetah, neither. You can't trust no beast—not even a man. I told Torelli that if I didn't get him first, one of his cats would some day. Oh, you needn't raise your eyebrows; no love ran to waste between Torelli and me—and I'm not going to pretend that I'm sorry; that's a cinch."

"Torelli was not killed by a beast, *madame;* he was murdered."

In the contracted fingers of the giantess the silver knife snapped in two pieces. Without removing her eyes from those of the detective, Mme. Torelli laid the fragments on the table. Makris heard her breath come hard; but the big, babyishly smooth face remained inscrutable. Waiting for a question that was not asked, the detective captain began to realize that in a number of ways Torelli's widow was a remarkable woman.

IV

"I WILL tell you what we know of the affair," he said. "We shall need your help."

When he reached that part of his narrative which introduced Carney and his revolver, Makris observed:

"We thought it strange that the sound of the shooting aroused no one."

Mme. Torelli had been following him attentively. She shook her head.

"Torelli kept his own hours. He often fired blank cartridges to throw a scare into one of the beasts he was training. No one would have noticed the shooting."

"He was killed with this," Makris said. He held up to her view the slender steel blade.

Mme. Torelli regarded it and him. He thought that he saw a faintly puzzled expression pass across her face; but if he did, it was very fleeting, and left the same imperturbable frankness in its wake.

"A district attorney might do pretty well with that," she commented, evidently sup-

plementing a line of thought. "I was a knife-thrower before I went nutty over Torelli and hooked up with him. That's one of my knives. We've lived a hard life together—which is no secret. But who used that knife—unless Torelli did it himself, to get me in a hole—God only knows; and I don't know Him well enough to ask Him."

"It could not have been suicide. He was struck from behind."

"I didn't do it, Mr. Detective."

"I do not think that you did."

"Wait!"

La Saetta heaved herself up from her chair and on groaning floor-boards crossed to the upright chest, pressed its catch, and opened it. Within it row upon row of glittering blades hung suspended in narrow racks of wood. The knives were of the same pattern as the one which Makris held. In the depths of the chest behind the racks were a number of broad-headed throwing-axes. The woman ran a finger up and down the rows of daggers, and counted them.

"Fifty-eight. Two of 'em are gone." She swung her big head around to face Makris. "I should say offhand that if you can find the second missing knife, you will be fairly close to knowing who killed Torelli."

"You have no idea?"

"No."

"Your husband had no enemies?"

"Perhaps; I won't say no; but I don't know who killed him."

"You will appear at the inquest, and give us such aid as you can?"

"If you are afraid that I won't, you had better arrest me."

"I do not think that will be necessary."

Makris searched thoroughly the living-rooms, four in number, of the Torellis. The woman made no objection. When he stepped from her door, she leaned in the doorway to watch him go.

"Say!" she called after him. "If you want to be so good, mister, have one of your cops bring in my milk from the gate. I kinda hate to parade before the audience in this get-up."

Coroner Arnold was chatting with Carney at the gate. Makris joined them to await his searching-party. It came to him soon, bringing two employees of the animal-trainer, who had been routed from their sleeping-quarters in separate lofts above the cages in the left wing.

One of them, a burly and brigandish chap who somewhat resembled Torelli, broke away when he saw the body, and flung himself beside it, weeping hysterically. Dipping his fingers in the blood which had flowed freely on the stones of the yard, he signed a cross against the sky, calling out wildly in the Sicilian dialect.

"What's that powwow?" asked Arnold.

"He's swearing a vendetta against the man who killed Torelli," replied Ernesti.

The Sicilian, Giuseppe Siracusa, turned out to be a cousin of the dead man. He had been found asleep. Makris concurred in Ernesti's opinion that Giuseppe was beyond suspicion.

In the second helper was discovered a simple-witted country lad, whom Torelli had hired from his father, a Patenton farmer, and whose duties had been to clean cages and fetch and carry for the beast-trainer. This Henry Shuvel had been wakeful that morning, and had heard, he said, the reports of Carney's revolver and the death-shrieks of the chetah, neither of which had awakened Giuseppe. Henry had not investigated. From his own story, corroborated by that of Siracusa, it developed that Henry had given unquestioning obedience to Torelli, whose authority over animals had been held by the lad in superstitious veneration. In fact, Henry had been little better than Torelli's slave.

Henry's daily schedule, as laid down by his master, called for arising at six o'clock to feed the beasts. The lad would as soon have thought of cutting off his hand as of bestirring himself one minute sooner. Henry wept copiously when he was told of the death of Torelli. From the lamentations of the boy it was to be gathered that the trainer of beasts had been a kind master to him.

There seemed to be no reason to suspect that either of Torelli's employees had any knowledge of the hand which had stricken their master.

Aware that Mme. Torelli was still leaning in her doorway and watching the proceedings, and remembering her request, the detective captain sent Patrolman Acton to carry to her such of the milk-bottles as had not been broken in their fall on the pavement.

With Hilfer, Makris then made a tour of all the buildings, though he did not expect to find anything. In the various sheds they found a number of hungry animals, includ-

ing Spada, the lion, who snarled at them in fury when he found that they had not come to feed him. But they found no assassin, no trace of one, and there was no place where it seemed possible that one might be in hiding.

When for the second time that morning the detective captain entered her dining-room, Mme. Torelli was calmly eating her breakfast, a proceeding which caused Hilfer to stare a bit as he courteously removed his hat. She paused with a spoon in her egg and glanced inquisitively at the two men. Makris shook his head.

"Thanks for the milk, cap," she said. "So you didn't find anything?"

"No. The possibility of a concealed murderer about your premises does not seem to cause you any uneasiness, Mme. Torelli."

"Nope; lived too close to danger all my life to be scary," she replied. "'Sides, I can take care of little Margaret." She went on with the egg.

Puzzled, Makris returned to the courtyard. The woman was too cool; yet he could not bring himself to suspect her of the killing. He was not so sure that she did not know a good bit about it. That it was a crime of passion, he was sure. Torelli's untouched rings and a wallet containing several bills of large denomination, which Arnold had found in his hip-pocket, disposed of a possible robbery theory.

"Saving your presence, Ernesti, confound these countrymen of yours, anyway," the captain remarked. "Though I'll guess that *she's* no Italian."

Ernesti confirmed the guess. La Saetta had been aforetime one Maggie Hicks, of New York's East Side, the sergeant was informed.

Thompson, the morgue attendant, arrived with his gruesome wagon. He and Lumsey were carrying Torelli from the courtyard when the whistle of a near-by factory shrilled its six-o'clock summons. Henry Shuvel approached Makris.

"Please, sir, ain't I to start feedin' the animals?" he inquired tearfully. "It's time to begin."

At that moment Spada emphasized the lad's appeal with a reverberating roar.

"Go ahead, my boy," assented Makris; "and you might feed the lion first, if it will stop his racket."

"But *he's* got the keys, sir," said Shuvel, jerking a thumb in the direction of Torelli's disappearing body.

"Oh, I see!"

Makris obtained the keys and handed them to Henry.

As the boy started on his errand, the captain stopped him.

"Who had keys for the door there, besides Mr. Torelli and the milkman?" he asked.

"Only the missus and Giuseppe, sir. There was only four keys." Henry slouched away, still weeping.

Makris decided that he would leave the lad for the present to look after the animals. Giuseppe, he would take to headquarters for extended questioning as to the domestic relations of the Torellis. He would leave a police guard over the premises.

Henry disappeared in one of the sheds. Soon afterward a satisfied snarl from Spada announced that the lion was worrying his breakfast. Arnold had departed. Hilfer, Ernesti, and Giuseppe went out through the door to Makris's car. Lumsey and Acton were lounging outside, where they had gone to help put the body on the morgue wagon. For the moment the detective captain was alone in the courtyard.

He was about to follow his men, when he noticed Torelli's whip lying on the stones near the body of the chetah. Pondering the problem which confronted him, he walked slowly across the yard and picked up the whip. As he straightened up again, he saw that Mme. Torelli was again standing in her doorway.

At the gate he paused before passing through the postern, and examined the fastenings of the larger entrance. They consisted of a thick iron bar eleven feet long, heavily hinged at one end to the framework of the archway, and resting at the other in a socket-brace, where it was further secured by a few links of chain and a dangling padlock of large size. The detective found this mechanism firmly fastened.

From the gate he turned to the door, idly cracking the whip in his hand. As he neared the postern, he trod accidentally on the writhing lash of the whip, and stumbled. He heard a singing in the air immediately above his head, and simultaneously with it, the slamming of a door on the far side of the courtyard.

Phut!

Makris possessed nerves far stronger than the ordinary; and they had been steadied and set by many trials. Nevertheless, a most disquieting thrill gamboled up his

spinal cord when he looked at the framework of the door in front of him and saw what was quivering there.

It was one of Mme. Torelli's throwing-knives — twin to the blood-stained blade which reposed in his pocket—and it had been propelled with such force that its needle point stood a full inch in the solid oak, and all the slender length of steel was humming like a tuning-fork.

V

For the space of a breath Makris regarded it; and he yielded unwilling tribute to the accuracy of the cast. The weapon had entered the door-frame at the level of his neck. Only his momentary stumble when his foot caught on the whip-lash had saved him from the fate of Torelli.

Though by habit the detective captain was not profane, he swore with nervous energy as the purpose and peril of that thrown knife flashed across his brain. Before the steel ceased to vibrate, he plucked it from the oak.

With tightened lips and a grim light in his brown eyes, he started across the courtyard toward the door which Mme. Torelli had slammed. On very rare occasions, and then only under extreme provocation, Scott Makris lost his temper. This was one of those occasions. The more he thought, the angrier he became. By the time he reached the porch his wrath was fairly bubbling; and it was no gentle hand that twisted the knob of the Widow Torelli's door.

The room where he was going was the lair of a giantess who could, without doubt, snap his back almost as easily as a few minutes before she had broken the silver knife. Plenty of the weapons with which she had proved herself an expert were ready to her hands. But Makris, aroused, did not give a thought to the danger. Forgotten was the pistol at his hip and the ready aid in the street behind him; and he strode into La Saetta's dining-room without defense other than her own slender bit of a blade.

Mme. Torelli, her back to the door, was bending over her table when Makris entered. At the sound of the latch she stopped rattling dishes and faced about with an agility that seemed incongruous to such a bulk.

"Oh, you've come back," she said inconsequentially; "I thought you—" She caught a better view of his face and broke off her sentence.

"Yes, *madame*, I have come back—come back alive, too."

Makris's irony was not palpably effective. Mme. Torelli's glance wandered over his person, took in the blade in his hand, and centered there. An expression of surprised inquiry gave place to a flare of fearful curiosity, at once succeeded by blankness.

"I see that you have found the second knife," she said.

Without reply, Makris stepped to the wooden chest and twitched its cover open. It was as he had left it. So the other knife had been held in reserve. Mme. Torelli eyed him keenly.

"Say, what's eatin' you?" she asked.

Makris had conquered his spasm of humor.

"Put on your things; you're going for a ride," he said almost genially.

"Meaning just what?"

"You are under arrest, charged with the murder of Antonio Torelli."

He had not looked for her to betray any surprise at the announcement; but she did, and, to the further puzzlement of the detective, it was the surprise of relief rather than fear.

"Gee, you bulls certainly are queer guys," she said at length. "Why didn't you say so in the first place?"

Not a word had Makris said about the attack upon himself; though what the woman had expected to gain by putting him out of the way was a mystery which he could not fathom. Nor was he, now that his anger had cooled, any more convinced than at first that she had killed her husband. Behind her attitude and actions was a something else, at which, as yet, he could not guess. He would have to wait. In the mean time he would make sure that she threw no more knives.

He did not reply to her last question. Mme. Torelli bestirred herself.

"'Scuse me while I primp up." She approached the door which led to her bedroom.

"Make it snappy."

Makris sat down and watched the door. Presently Hilfer joined him. After the situation had been explained to him, the only comment which the Swiss had to offer was, "This iss not a bleasant blace at all," and he touched a match to his partly burned stogy.

Fifteen minutes after her disappearance, La Saetta loomed through the doorway,

AN EXPRESSION OF SURPRISED INQUIRY GAVE PLACE TO A FLARE OF FEARFUL CURIOSITY, AT ONCE SUCCEEDED BY BLANKNESS. "I SEE THAT YOU HAVE FOUND THE SECOND KNIFE," SHE SAID

ponderous in black silk, her heavy hair twisted up and concealed under a white-plumed picture hat of imposing dimensions, but which, large as it was, could not impart any top-heaviness to the elephantine figure of its wearer.

Unaided, she had girded herself with a corset; and it and the trim shoes of lavender leather into which she had crammed her feet must have caused her the tortures of the damned. She carried a grip, and was cheerful.

"'Fraid you ain't got no bracelets big enough to fit these," she remarked facetiously, extending wrists somewhat larger than loaves of French bread.

Makris gallantly relieved her of the grip. Near the courtyard gate she hesitated.

"Say, mister, before we leave the ranch, will you tell me just where you got that second knife?" she asked Makris.

"In the neck, almost, *madame,*" he retorted, grinning. "You need not worry; you are not losing your aim. You'd have got me, not a doubt of it, if I had not happened to stumble over this whip."

He stooped and recovered the lash from where he had let it fall. Hilfer opened the postern door; but Mme. Torelli halted inside the yard, and for the first time she made a show of temper. With arms akimbo, she turned toward the detective captain.

"Look here, Mr. Bright Guy"—her mannish voice descending to its lower register—"you got me pinched for somethin' what I didn't do; and that ain't worryin' me a little bit. But what's this funny business about that second knife? Are you meanin' to insinya—insinja—damn it, are you hintin' that I know something about that, too?"

Brazen acting, or genuine ignorance? Makris, who had listened to the perilous song of the flying blade, was not to be blamed for suspecting it to be the former. Still, the woman's voice rang true. For answer, he placed a finger below the scar in the oaken door-frame.

"There's the mark where it struck," he said; "and then I heard your door slam."

Mme. Torelli's broad face faded from warm pink to sickly white. She stared at the deep puncture in the wooden beam, from it to the detective; and then glanced fearfully over her shoulder at the line of forbidding buildings.

"Did—did some one *throw* that knife at you?" she half whispered.

"Unless it threw itself."

Makris watched her sharply. Again she looked behind her, across the body of the dead chetah. Twice she swallowed hard and seemed to be about to speak, but did not. Her poise came back. With a toss of her head, she crowded through the doorway and marched heavily toward the waiting automobile.

"It iss that she did not throw that knife, captain," Hilfer whispered.

With a nod, Makris agreed with the conclusion. Directing Sergeant Ernesti and Patrolman Lumsey to take Mme. Torelli and Giuseppe to police headquarters, the captain turned back to hunt down the malevolent presence that lurked within that stretch of ugly brick wall.

Makris's car was a seven-passenger, in which Mme. Torelli occupied the room of three. No sooner had she settled with a prodigious sigh into the rear seat than Torelli's cousin, Giuseppe Siracusa, twisted around and let fly at her a volley of excited Italian. Ernesti listened, and gathered that Siracusa, rather incoherently, accused the woman of bringing on the death of Torelli, though he did not charge her directly with the crime.

Giuseppe seemed bent on laying bare the infelicities of the Torelli household, when, to the disappointment of the alert sergeant, the *madame* put an abrupt check on the Sicilian's copious flow of recrimination, saying in English:

"Aw, shut up, Joe! This gink here is taking in both ears full."

In his excitement Siracusa had forgotten the presence of a fellow countryman. Admonished, he flashed a scowling glance at Ernesti and relapsed into sullen silence.

In the hope of gleaning a bit of information for his chief, Ernesti then asked Mme. Torelli a question that had for some minutes been uppermost in his mind:

"Have you got a key to the door in the gate?"

"No."

"But you had a key?"

Mme. Torelli eyed her interlocutor with an air of bored contempt.

"Yes; I had one," she answered. "I lost it."

She turned her head away. Ernesti wished that he had left the question to Makris.

In the hands of Police Chief Minter and Anthony Skelton, the commissioner of public safety, and later in those of District Attorney Barnett, La Saetta became volubly irrelevant, parrying all their queries with more or less inconsequent replies. Pressed sternly by the district attorney, she mounted on the pedestal of her dignity; and thereafter neither threats nor words of honey could budge her.

Less adroit, but equally stubborn, Giuseppe would say nothing at all.

Actuated by motives as widely separated as the moon and sun, the dead man's widow and his cousin had elected to block the case of the people *versus* the unknown slayer of Antonio Torelli.

Mme. Torelli was locked up on the charge of murder in the first degree, which Makris had instructed Ernesti to prefer against

her. Siracusa also went behind bars, detained as a material witness.

VI

While three officials tried their respective hands at "sweating" at headquarters—and only stimulated their own perspiration—Captain Makris and his aids, with drawn revolvers, turned the buildings of the animal-trainer in Spruce Street literally inside out. Four hours they put in at the work; but, aside from Henry Shuvel, pottering faithfully among his cages, and the miscellaneous collection of beasts which Torelli had harbored, the search of the man-hunters was fruitless.

Convinced that not a living creature larger than a barn-rat could have eluded that painstaking search, Makris did the only thing that logic left him—he arrested the lad Shuvel.

The detective captain was reluctant; but reason said inexorably that if Mme. Torelli had not launched that second blade, then Henry Shuvel must have done it.

Only three living persons had been found within Torelli's walls. There seemed no ground for belief that any other visitor had been there in the night before the milkman discovered the trainer's corpse.

One of those three persons must have murdered Torelli. One of them must have tried to send Makris on the same road. One hand alone was known to possess the skill of launching the singing blade. That was the vast, pink hand of La Saetta. Despite the plain evidence, Makris still had a feeling that amounted to a "hunch" that Margaret Torelli was innocent, at least of the killing. Circumstances absolved Giuseppe of the latter attempt. He had been outside the wall when the dagger flew. Reason said that the guilt must lie between the woman and the half-wit. So Henry, much bewildered and weeping, was sent to prison.

Makris telephoned to the Dorchester Park Department office and succeeded in having one of the helpers at the park zoo detailed temporarily to look after Torelli's animals.

After eating the lunch which he had packed for the fishing-trip, the detective captain motored out into Patenton township. He wished to talk with the parents and neighbors of young Shuvel.

The Shuvel home was a square bit of a frame farmhouse on the Wilton Road. It was grown about by apple-trees, and sweet-brier and hollyhocks were blooming in the front yard. Henry's family, mother father, and little sister, were at home.

Henry's father took the arrest of his son philosophically, more so than did the lad's mother. Both of them were sure, naturally, that Henry had done no wrong. They bolstered their opinion with reasons. Henry, on his visits home, had spoken much of Torelli, ever with respect and affection. The lad always had been looked upon as harmless, was never known to lose his temper, and was uniformly truthful.

"Jest you ask Henry the plain question, did he do it?" said Mr. Shuvel, and added, with conviction: "If he tells you no, there ain't no power on earth kin make me believe he's guilty. He's too simple to keep a secret."

"Don't you go and scare my boy into one of them fake confessions, now!" warned Ma Shuvel, who was an inveterate reader of the Dorchester *Times-Union*. "He's a good boy, if he *is* a little lackin'."

The little sister looked wistful.

Henry was of good repute among his neighbors. Without exception they corroborated all that his parents had said. He was a good-natured, whole-hearted, simple-minded country lad. It was incredible to them that he could have been seized with the blood-lust.

"Was the boy ever known to have talked about knife-throwing?" Makris asked.

None of Henry's companions had ever heard him discuss such a subject. He was not known to have any particular accomplishments with knives, except those used at table. He was, however, his father boasted, a "rarin' fine shot with a rabbit-gun."

It was mid-afternoon when Makris returned to headquarters. He heard Ernesti's report, and dismissed the tired sergeant, conferred with chief, commissioner, and district attorney, and attended to routine.

Shortly before he left his desk for the night Hilfer told him that Siracusa had promised to find the slayer of Torelli, provided he were allowed his liberty.

"Will he tell us who he thinks it is?" the captain asked.

"No."

"Then we'll leave him where he is, and give him time to think it over. If we let him out in his present frame of mind we'll have another murder to inquire into."

"SAY, MISTER, BEFORE WE LEAVE THE RANCH, WILL YOU TELL ME JUST WHERE YOU GOT THAT SECOND KNIFE?" SHE ASKED MAKRIS

For some time before he slept, Makris mused over the tangle. He thought of Henry, "too simple to keep a secret," and of the other, the woman, deep enough to keep many of them.

"I suppose," he reflected, "that the district attorney is right, and that the only thing to do is to go ahead and put the woman on trial. But I'd wager a month's pay that she didn't do it. What, in the name of Michael, scared her so at the gate? For she *was* scared; that was no fake. Tomorrow I shall have a talk with Henry."

But the morrow brought new and unlooked-for developments in the Torelli case; and the detective captain did not talk to Henry.

Dorchester's three afternoon newspapers had featured, with many details, the mystery of the murder of the animal-trainer; but Commissioner Skelton, wishing to play fair and not injure his political status, had

instructed the police chief to withhold the arrest of Mme. Torelli and give it out to the two morning papers. The attempt upon the life of Captain Makris was not made public at all.

When the detective captain reached his office in the morning he found a young Italian waiting for him—a slim chap, taller than the average of his countrymen, and differing from them in two other respects. He was able to control his emotions and speak calmly, though his business was serious enough; and he had a fluent command of English.

"Torelli case, sir," said the doorman laconically in announcing him.

"I have read the morning papers," began the visitor as soon as the door of the captain's office had closed upon them. "It is not true, what they are telling. The Signora Torelli did not kill her husband."

"What makes you think that?" asked Makris.

"I do not think; I *know*."

"What do you know about it?"

"Everything. I was there."

Makris shook his head incredulously.

"But yes—I was," insisted the young man with great earnestness. "To prove it, there is the key to the gate."

He tossed a key on the captain's blotter. Makris knew the bit of steel at a glance. It was the missing key of the four which fitted the lock of Torelli's postern—the one which Mme. Torelli had told Ernesti she had lost.

"How did you come by this?"

"That I would rather not tell—but it is to save a life. She—the Signora Torelli—give it to me." He blushed under his swarthy skin.

"Then—" Makris's look was searching. The visitor nodded, and the flush faded to pallor.

"Yes; I killed Torelli—alone—by myself. No one knew."

Makris rang for his stenographer.

Fabio Catanesi was the name the man gave. He was twenty-eight years old. His father was a wealthy fruit merchant of New Orleans. Fabio had met Mme. Torelli in St. Louis, and had followed the Torellis to Dorchester. It was evident that he was infatuated with the woman, and that she had, to a degree at least, reciprocated his affections. She had given him the key.

"But it was for nothing wrong, captain—on my life, it was for nothing wrong!" Fabio protested to Makris. "We had hoped some time to marry. It is true that we met. The pig, Torelli, suspected. I could stand it no longer. I had the key. Night before last I stole a knife from the big box of knives. When the *signora* thought that I was gone, I was hidden in the courtyard. It was wrong, I know, to take one of her knives. I should have known that she would be suspected. But I was mad. The knives were there. The thought came to me in a moment.

"In the night the chetah smelled me. It became uneasy, and Torelli, who was busy in one of the buildings, loosed it and came out with it. I struck him from behind, used the key, and left him lying there. There is the key, to prove that what I say is the truth."

"You took only one knife from the box?"

"Only one; that was enough."

"You left the courtyard at once?"

Catanesi smiled faintly.

"One does not linger, after—what I had done. I left the courtyard at a quarter to four o'clock."

"The chetah, you say, was uneasy? What did it do when you struck Torelli?"

Again Fabio's face reflected the wan ghost of a smile.

"The chetah and I were a little acquainted," he said; "it did not harm me."

"That appears to be complete—if he will repeat it in court," commented the district attorney when Makris showed him Catanesi's confession. "I congratulate you on a quick clean-up, captain."

"Thanks," replied the detective without enthusiasm. Makris was pondering the how and the why of the second dagger. The obvious reason for its casting did not altogether satisfy him.

Fabio's confession made another "lead" for the afternoon newspapers. When Makris went in person to the jail to inform Mme. Torelli that the murder charge against her was withdrawn, he found her already in possession of the news. Moreover, she was striding about her cell in a state of excitement which he would scarcely have believed of her.

"Say, mister," she said, almost pleadingly, tapping her fat fingers on the newspaper which she held, "you surely ain't going to let that poor young simp get away with the bunch of nonsense that he's told you, are you?"

"And why not?" Makris asked easily. The sight of La Saetta stirred out of her customary calm was not altogether displeasing to the detective captain. "You ought to be satisfied," he continued. "He has let you out of a pretty tight situation."

"Piffle!" scornfully. "He's told you a pack of lies, and I can prove it. He didn't no more kill Torelli than my grandmother's goat. In the first place, he wasn't down there that night at all."

"So you say; but he tells a different story. Which will the jury be apt to believe?"

"Curse the jury!" Mme. Torelli took a deep breath. "He says that he *stuck* Torelli, don't he?" she went on.

"Yes."

"Well, that lets *him* out. Torelli wasn't stuck; he was hit by a thrown knife. Your coroner and his doctors—if they've got the brains God gave geese—had oughta tell that. All they gotta do is fit the knife to the hole in Torelli's neck. A thrown knife strikes straight on. When a man strikes with a knife, he don't jab it straight; he strikes either up or down—if he's swinging at another man's neck, he strikes down."

VII

With the air of one who knew what she was talking about, and who had settled the matter, La Saetta paused.

Makris, who had felt all along that the woman knew much more of the crime than she had been willing to tell, decided to "play" her further.

"All that would be hard to prove," he said doubtfully, "and young Catanesi has confessed to the killing, over his signature, telling us just how he went about it. His story seems to agree very well with the facts as we know them—"

"Lies! lies!" La Saetta crumpled the newspaper in her huge fingers and hurled it in a ball on the floor of the cell. A gleam of shrewdness passed athwart her perturbed features.

"Say, mister, did Fa—did Mr. Catanesi tell you that he threw that second knife at you, too; and did you believe him?"

"Who do *you* think killed Torelli?" parried the detective. "Was it Giuseppe?"

Mme. Torelli sniffed.

"I'm not trying to get anybody in wrong, mister," she answered. "I'm only trying to keep an innocent young fool out of trouble. Anyway, it wa'n't Joe."

"Do you think, then, that it could have been young Shuvel?"

"Naw; Henry wouldn't murder a mouse. But what about that second knife, mister? You've asked so many questions, now answer one."

"Our theory," Makris said didactically, "is that Catanesi killed your husband in a moment of jealous passion; that you knew of the crime, and are trying to shield him; and that you, for reasons best known to yourself, threw the second knife at me. Everything is not clear; but on that theory we shall take the case into court."

"You won't, either!" retorted Mme. Torelli with animation.

She looked fixedly at him for a moment following the outburst. To his surprise, he saw tears trickling across her babyish cheeks, though she did not sob.

"Mister, I guess—I'll have to come across," she said painfully. "I killed Torelli. I'll give you all the dope later before your stenographer. Fabio's been lying to you, so's to save my skin. I can't let him do it. I threw the knife at you, too, if you like; but that don't cut any ice with the murder."

"Mme. Torelli, excuse my saying so, but I do not believe a word of it," replied the now thoroughly mystified detective.

"The jury will," taunted La Saetta with a hard laugh.

"Do you really suspect that Fabio did it?" persisted Makris.

But Mme. Torelli was untrustful and game.

"I've spoke my little piece," she said, "and may Gawd have mercy on my soul!"

With that the detective captain had to be content. He passed to the other side of the jail "pit," and in a cell in the third tier found Giuseppe Siracusa. Makris looked in at the prisoner through the barred door.

"Joe, do you think that the *signora* killed Torelli?" he asked.

Siracusa gloomed at his questioner moodily.

"No; the *signora* no keel the *padrone*," he replied after a pause.

"Did Henry do it?"

"No, no! Not Henry! He good fella."

"Joe, did Fabio Catanesi do it?"

With a shrieked imprecation in Italian, Siracusa fairly flung himself against the door of the cell, and clung to the bars, his

face within a foot of that of Makris. His eyes glowed like live coals.

"Damma Catanesi!" he yelled, when he remembered his English. "He do it! He do it! How you finda heem?"

Without enlightening Giuseppe, Makris went on his way.

"I'll say that it begins to look rather serious for our young friend, Fabio," he mused. "Confound it! I'm beginning to take more than a professional interest in this case. If I'm not careful, some one is going to lie himself into the electric chair before I get to the bottom of it. Now we'll see what Henry has to say about it. If he lives up to his reputation, he, at least, will tell me the truth; though it's dollars to goose-eggs that he doesn't know anything useful."

Poor Henry! The course of events had been too rapid and harsh for him. He was used enough to barred doors; but theretofore he had been mostly on the other side of them. His jail detention both bewildered and frightened him. He remembered Makris's face not unkindly.

"Please, sir, when can I go home?" was his greeting when the detective entered his cell.

"Before long, I hope, my boy," Makris replied.

"So do I," assented Henry, brightening up. "I don't like the cooking here. I want one of ma's pies. Ner I don't like the folks, neither. They're crosser 'n Spada when he's hungry, an' I can't sleep nights fer their racket. You ain't lettin' poor Spada get hungry, are you?"

Makris reassured him.

"Now see here, Henry," said the captain confidentially, seating himself on the iron cot alongside the lad, "I've got a hard job on my hands, and I think you can help me out. If you will try your best, I'll do my level best to see that you get home before long, where you can get all the pies you want, and see your dad and mother, and that little sister of yours."

"I'll try, by gosh, I will!" promised Henry earnestly.

"Henry, I want you to tell me just who you think it was killed Mr. Torelli."

At his late benefactor's name, the boy's eyes grew moist; but he answered readily enough, with a note of surprise in his voice.

"Why, Raja done it, sir! I thought that you knew."

"Who is Raja?"

"The chetah, sir; the one the policeman shot to pieces."

Another hope gone, thought the detective. Henry was not going to prove useful.

"Henry, Mr. Torelli was not killed by Raja. He was stabbed with a knife."

In an access of violent trembling, Henry cowered away from his interlocutor, hiding his face with his hands.

"He was murdered!" he gasped, shivering like a frightened animal.

"Yes, Henry, he was murdered; and I have got to find out who did it. He always was kind to you, Henry; and I thought that you'd be glad to help me. I want you to tell me if you know of any one who you think might have done it."

Henry raised a white, scared face.

"Goshamighty, no, sir, I don't," he whispered; "I can't think of a one."

"What about Giuseppe?"

"Why, him an' the boss was cousins, sir, an' always good friends. Joe couldn't 'a' done it."

"Could it have been Mme. Torelli, do you think?"

If possible, Henry's face turned still more pale than it had been.

"Why, she's a woman. It don't seem like—say, you won't never tell her that I told you, now will you?" He looked pleadingly at Makris.

"No; what is it, Henry?"

"I hadn't oughta tell, sir; but they wasn't good friends." Henry leaned toward the captain and spoke very low. "I seen her *whip* him twice!"

"What? Whip Mr. Torelli?"

"Yes, sir—laid right into him with the whip he used on the animals, an' made him holler."

Despite the strong flavor of tragedy in the lad's tale, the picture it formed in Makris's mind was ludicrous; the fearless trainer of wild beasts, the master of lions, whipped by a woman until he whimpered!

"Did you ever meet a man down there by the name of Fabio Catanesi?" was the next question.

"No, sir," Henry answered promptly, "but I heard his name. The boss an' the missus was talkin' about a man of that name when she waled him the first time."

"Did you ever see Mme. Torelli throw a knife?"

"No, sir. What kind of a knife?"

"You didn't know that there was a big

MAKRIS DID THE ONLY THING THAT LOGIC LEFT HIM—HE ARRESTED THE LAD SHUVEL

box of knives in her dining-room, and that she used to throw them in the circus?"

"No; I never heard of that."

It was evident that Henry had something else upon his mind than knives at the moment; and as his was a one-cylinder mind, Makris let him run on.

"I seen her use the whip a lot," he volunteered reminiscently. "She wasn't no more feared of the animals than the boss was. She went in the cage an' durned near waled the hide off'n Cain once, fer screechin' an' mockin' at her when she was crossin' the yard. Gosh, how Cain hates her! It was after that—"

But Makris had arisen.

"I'm coming back in a few minutes, Henry," he said. "There is something I want to show you."

"All right," responded the docile Henry. "Good-by, sir."

The captain stepped over to police headquarters and returned. The "something" which he had to show Henry was the dagger with which Torelli had been done to death, the sinister stains still on its blade and hilt.

"Have you ever—" He stopped, for Henry greeted the appearance of the knife with a look of intelligence, and his mouth flew open.

VIII

"Why, that's one of Cain's knives!" exclaimed young Shuvel. "Ugh, there's blood all over it!"

"Cain! Who is Cain?" Makris felt a thrill of excitement. It seemed that at last the trail was becoming warm.

"He's the smartest chimp in the world, sir," replied Henry with true professional pride. "We—Mr. Torelli and I, sir—trained him. He's smarter a pile than Napoleon or Consul; and you know what they could do. The boss was expecting to sell him into vaudeville, too, for ten thousand dollars. We'd oughta get more than that, sir, the boss said, only chimps are so delicate, they're risky."

"I see; but what did Cain do with the knife, Henry?" the captain pursued, his impatience only half concealed.

"I was goin' to tell you about that, sir, when you went out. He threw the knives at marks, Cain did. That's one of the tricks the boss taught him. Gee! Gosh! Cain could hit 'most anything with one of his knives, sir!"

"Think hard, Henry, and tell me—just when did you see this knife last?"

Henry's forehead wrinkled, and then he dented it with his knuckles. Makris had laid the knife on the cot between them. The lad stared at it. Suddenly he shrank from it, a horrified comprehension dawning in his eyes.

"*Goshamighty!*"

"Yes, Henry; yes! What have you remembered?"

Makris bent forward eagerly. Henry shrank still farther from the dagger.

"*Cain!* That's the boss's blood on it! *I seen the boss put the two knives in Cain's cage the night he was killed!* The cage looks out on the yard! Cain done it! Cain done it! He killed the boss! Oh, my Gawd!"

With a burst of hysterical weeping Henry rocked himself to and fro on his prison cot.

Makris drew a long breath and sat back. In a series of flashes, like pictures projected upon a screen, he saw the reenactment of the chain of events which the lad had completed—the hatred of the woman for the man; the more than hatred of the man for the woman; the humiliation of the whip; Torelli's Italian nature; the animosity of the beast toward Mme. Torelli, her morning trips across the yard to get the milk at the gate; Torelli's patient training of his living instrument of revenge so ready to his purpose. And then, the stroll with the chetah, for some unknown reason, in the early hours; the fatal forgetfulness; the dim, moving figure in the gray of the dawn, at which Cain had launched his glittering fury.

There is an Aztec proverb to the effect that a spear thrown against the heavens returns upon him who threw it.

"Henry, I think that I shall let you go home about to-morrow afternoon," said Makris.

"Will—will they send Cain to the electric chair?" asked Henry in awed tones.

"No, son."

Again gray morning in the courtyard of the trainer of beasts; the same acrid odor on the heavy air; the same slinking forms padding ceaselessly back and forth in their narrow cages; Spada, the lion, roaring his harsh and hungry challenge.

Two men and a lad moved across the yard—Detective Captain Scott Makris,

District Attorney John Barnett, and Henry Shuvel. The park attendant who had been caring for Torelli's beasts sat on the porch and watched them with sleepy curiosity.

Midway between gate and porch, at the north side of the yard, the party halted. Makris flashed the rays of his electric lantern into the depths of a cage. A half-human cry of anger greeted the light as it fell upon the largest and without exception the ugliest chimpanzee that the detective ever had laid eyes upon.

This was the redoubtable Cain. The brute stood nearly four feet high; his wiry and powerful arms were more than thirty inches long; and his brown countenance was stamped with the poetic hideousness of one of Gustave Doré's demons.

"Make you receptive of scientific theories concerning your prehistoric ancestors, John?" queried Makris.

Barnett, who was by no means a handsome man, grunted.

"Let's get it over with," he said. The district attorney was skeptical, and dubbed Henry's tale "moonshine."

In the mean time, Cain, who either had smelled or seen Henry, crowded to the front of the cage, thrust his hairy arms through the bars, and wound them around the lad's neck, whimpering and snuggling with every evidence of warm affection.

"Put the knives in the cage, Henry," directed the captain.

The lad complied. Makris switched off the light. For all his skepticism, the district attorney sheered away hastily when he saw the two keen, bright weapons go into the cage.

Makris had prepared himself a shield of thick wood to cover his vulnerable spots, and covered it with cloth. While the others sat on the porch and watched, the captain, holding his shield warily, patrolled the yard from the porch to the gate. Nothing happened. Cain refused to be drawn, though the detective patiently repeated the ruse at intervals of ten or fifteen minutes for more than an hour. Cain was not sleeping; for the watchers heard him snarl several times; and once they heard the knives clinking together.

When it grew a little lighter, Makris fetched one of Mme. Torelli's gaudy dressing-gowns from the house and paraded in it. That apparition evoked a flow of simian profanity from the chimpanzee, but no knives.

"Better quit the monkey business, Makris, and come on home," Barnett punned grouchily, as he bit the tip from his third cigar. "We've got two perfectly good confessions now; all we have to do is to prove which one is a fake."

"Confound it, John, both of 'em are fakes, I tell you!" the captain replied testily. "Can't you see that each of 'em thinks the other really did it, and each is lying to save the other? Henry here says that Mme. Torelli didn't know anything about the chimp's knife-throwing stunt."

"Nor did any one else," retorted Barnett. "I don't believe that he ever threw one. If he did, why—allowing that he mistook Torelli for his wife—why did he heave the second one at you?"

Makris, who had been pacing up and down the paving in front of the porch, stopped short and smote upon his thigh.

"John, you hit a bull's-eye that time, and didn't know it," he said. "I've wasted a lot of our time because of the lack of that suggestion." He turned to Henry. "Is there one of Torelli's whips about the place?" he asked.

Henry hastened into one of the buildings and returned with the counterpart of the whip which the captain picked up in the courtyard on the morning of the murder.

Once more the detective walked down the yard toward the gate. As he went, he made the lash of the whip whistle and crack in the air. That time no complaint came from Cain's cage; but when Makris was directly opposite it, the watchers on the porch heard a smart rap on the wooden shield he carried, and saw him stagger. He cried out in triumph and came running back toward them, shifting his shield to his other side as he turned. Well for him that he took that precaution. He had not gone three paces when there sounded again the impact of a blow upon the wood, and again he veered as he ran.

Before the eyes of the three men he held up the protection which he had used. Fast in it, about a foot apart, and thrown so fiercely that they were sunk half-way to their hilts, were Mme. Torelli's two knives.

"Well, John, what do you say to that?" Makris asked.

"I say that you are lucky you had that piece of board," replied Barnett.

"Is that all? Come now, own up."

"Oh, well, I'm convinced, if that's what you want," grumbled the district attorney.

Mexico, from Diaz to Carranza

THE STORY OF THIRTY YEARS OF PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY UNDER A VIRTUAL DICTATOR, FOLLOWED BY EIGHT YEARS OF POLITICAL CHAOS, ECONOMIC DISASTER, AND STRAINED RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES

By Frederic Austin Ogg

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PRESIDENT in name, dictator in fact, a king without a throne, an emperor without a scepter, Porfirio Diaz ruled Mexico with a rod of iron for thirty-one years. He governed as the Mexicans like to be governed; and while they cast him off in his old age, there have been times in the past eight years when many of them would have been glad to have him back.

The story of this remarkable man's rise to power—President Roosevelt, in 1908, called him "the greatest statesman now living"—finds few parallels in either fact or fiction. He was born in 1830 at Oaxaca, in the extreme south of the country, and was the son of a Spanish innkeeper and a half-breed Mixtec. He studied law in the office of Benito Juarez—the only presi-

A TYPICAL LANDSCAPE AMONG THE MOUNTAINS OF NORTHERN MEXICO, WHERE ROADS ARE FEW, AND IN MANY DISTRICTS TRAVEL IS POSSIBLE ONLY BY BURRO TRAILS

A TYPICAL SCENE IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN MEXICO—OF MEXICO'S TOTAL POPULATION OF ABOUT SIXTEEN MILLIONS, THIRTEEN MILLIONS ARE INDIANS, WHO STILL LIVE IN PRIMITIVE FASHION

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dent in Mexican history who can be ranked with Diaz himself—and while still a youth gave instruction in the subject in his home city. The war with the United States, in 1846, found him with a musket on his shoulder; and thenceforth military service and politics claimed his energies almost exclusively.

In 1861 he was elected to the Federal Congress. From 1862 to 1867 he, with Juarez, led the opposition to the French invaders and to Emperor Maximilian. In 1871 he made a strong race for the presidency against Juarez.

In 1872, when Juarez died in office and was succeeded by Lerdo de Tejada, Diaz raised the standard of revolt, and, failing in his attempt, was obliged to flee the country. For four years he lived as a refugee in the United States. In 1876 he returned, in disguise and with many a hairbreadth escape, to his own land, put himself at the head of a powerful faction of anti-Lerdists, forced the president to flee, in his turn, to the friendly soil of the United States, and was proclaimed provisional president. In May, 1877, he was duly elected president for the term ending in November, 1880.

There was a law forbidding a president to succeed himself, and in 1880 the office passed peaceably to Manuel Gonzalez; but in 1884 Diaz was reelected, and at his suggestion the somewhat awkward rule was abrogated. Thenceforth, reelections—six of them, at four-year intervals—followed one another with the regularity of the suns; and every one was announced as a "unanimous" choice.

When a country has had eighty presidents in fifty-five years, and then submits to the rule of one president for thirty-one years, it is safe to assume that this president is not an ordinary sort of man. The assump-

tion clearly holds in the case of Diaz. Hard-working, abstemious, iron-willed, fearless, and unscrupulous, he differed profoundly from a score of other Mexican dictators in his extraordinary understanding of the susceptibilities and the weaknesses of his people, and in his astuteness in playing off the forces of opposition one against another.

The bulwarks of his power were three—the armed forces, the wealthy Mexicans, and foreign capital. The army was used with unsparing hand to suppress every manifestation of discontent, and a military force which Diaz himself created, the *guardias rurales*, or state mounted police, served an excellent purpose in patrolling the highways and protecting property. The interesting thing about this mounted police is that, on the principle of setting a thief to catch a thief, the members were recruited mainly from the swarms of bandits that

THE MEAT-MARKET IN VERA CRUZ—NOTE THE VULTURES, THE FEATHERED SCAVENGERS OF THE TROPICAL CITIES OF MEXICO

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for decades had made life miserable for travelers and traders. By paying these people more than any one else could afford to pay them, the president held them fast in his own service, and thereby achieved the double end of keeping them out of mischief and preventing other folk from making trouble. Clad in picturesque uniforms of tight-fitting gray cloth, with flaming neckties and wide sombreros, armed to the teeth and mounted on splendid horses, these guardsmen became familiar and respected figures in all parts of the country.

Wealthy Mexicans are not numerous, but as matters have stood, they constitute the only class of the people whose feelings and wishes need be considered by the ruling power. Hence Diaz systematically curried favor with them by lavish distribution of offices and honors.

He himself took office, furthermore, at just about the time when the country's natural resources had become apparent to the capitalists and business men of the world. His government held out every inducement in the form of concessions; and when it proved itself strong enough to guarantee the safety of investments, the opportunity to make large profits drew in huge amounts of American, British, German, and French capital. From first to last, Diaz dealt liberally with the foreign investing interests, and was in turn backed up by them.

Government was autocratic in the extreme—"benevolent despotism," one writer has called it, "with the benevolence not overdone." The constitution, which on paper provided for a broadly democratic system, was disregarded when found inconvenient. Elections were farces; every one knew beforehand how they would result. Proposals to overhaul the political machinery were frowned down.

Popular opinion—if, indeed, such a thing could be said to exist—found no opportunity for expression. The governors of the states and the *jefes politicos*, or local magistrates, were under complete control from Mexico City. Congress was a harmless debating society. Power rested absolutely with the dictator-president and a clique of politicians, the *cientificos*—"scientists" only by courtesy—buttressed by the vested interests, native and foreign.

Before they were fully aware of the kind of man with whom they had to deal, some of the newspapers made bold to criticise the government. Thereupon Diaz had the most outspoken editors arrested and confined in a prison intended only for the worst criminals. After being kept for a week on a diet of bread and water, these men were summoned before the president.

"Now, gentlemen," he asked, "what do you think of my government?"

"*Señor Presidente*," they replied, "we look upon it as the finest government on earth."

"Just continue to think so, gentlemen, and we shall get along splendidly."

After that the press was duly tractable.

No one was readier to admit that the country did not have representative government than was Diaz himself; but he said that his people were not yet qualified to govern themselves, and no one who knows Mexico can deny that he was right. Somehow, some time, this capacity must be, and will be, developed. Diaz might have done more than he did to promote it; but that, under the conditions, his policies were broadly justifiable is proved by even the barest summary of the country's progress during his presidency.

WHAT DIAZ DID FOR MEXICO

Every state and territory was redeemed from chronic lawlessness and disorder. The national income was raised from twenty to more than one hundred million dollars a year. In 1876 Mexican bonds bearing ten and twelve per cent interest could be bought in London for ten cents on the dollar; in 1910 the republic's four-per-cents were selling at ninety-seven cents on the dollar. Imports increased eightfold and exports sixfold. Four hundred miles of railway became fifteen thousand. The control of mining was nationalized, and the annual production of gold and silver was raised from twenty-six million dollars to one hundred and twenty-five millions.

In banking, manufacturing, oil-production, and other activities the story is the same. Even within the field of public education, where progress was perhaps least satisfactory, the number of schools was multiplied by three, the number of pupils by five, and the annual outlay by four.

Relations with the outside world, furthermore, were almost uniformly satisfactory. At the outset, it is true, there was some friction with the United States. President Grant withheld recognition on the ground that Diaz's elevation to the presidency was

THE NATIONAL PALACE IN THE CITY OF MEXICO, ON THE AFTERNOON OF SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1913, THE DAY ON WHICH THE REVOLUTION AGAINST MADERO'S GOVERNMENT BEGAN—PRESIDENT MADERO STOOD ON THE CENTRAL BALCONY, UNDER THE CANOPY, MAKING A SPEECH TO THE CROWD, WHICH APPARENTLY PAID HIM SMALL ATTENTION, AND FIRING BEGAN SHORTLY AFTERWARD

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irregular, and President Hayes deferred it still further because of outrages on the border. The diplomacy of the United States at this period, as described in the "Memoirs" of General John W. Foster, the American minister, affords, indeed, a striking parallel to the policy of the Wilson administration in 1913-1914 relating to the government of Huerta; and it was no less justly criticised by our official representatives and by others who were in a position to know the true situation.

But Diaz soon cleared the way for an understanding. He did not share that fear of annexation by the United States which had long excited and confused many of his countrymen, and he felt able to deal with us in a cordial, frank, and business-like manner. His country needed railroads, telegraphs, and other improvements, and he was unwilling to tolerate any obstacle to the inflow of American capital. The border difficulties were therefore amicably adjusted, and in 1879 our minister announced the recognition of Diaz and was formally received.

In the early eighties commercial relations were unsettled, owing to Mexico's termination of her commercial treaty with us in 1881, and to the refusal of our Senate to ratify a new reciprocity agreement negotiated in 1883. In 1885, however, President Cleveland was able to describe the relations of the two countries as "most cordial"; and a group of postal, trade, and extradition conventions soon removed every source of misunderstanding.

When the United States went to war with Spain in 1898, attempts were made by Spaniards to create disturbances on the frontier, in the hope of enlisting Mexico against us; but the Mexican government broke up the effort and punished the instigators of the movement. Four years later a controversy over the endowments of the Roman Catholic missions in California became the first case to go before The Hague Tribunal, and when it was decided in our favor, Mexico loyally accepted the verdict. In 1910 the friendly relations of the two countries found expression in the visit of President Taft to President Diaz on the Rio Grande border.

Efforts in opposition to the continued rule of Diaz were ruthlessly suppressed, and more than one venturesome aspirant to the succession was shot, stabbed, or otherwise put out of the way. At last, however, in

A MEXICAN IRRIGATION CANAL, BUILT BY AMERICAN ENGINEERS—THE MOST IMPORTANT IRRIGATION WORKS IN MEXICO ARE IN THE FERTILE COTTON-GROWING DISTRICTS OF THE NORTHERN STATES OF COAHUILA AND DURANGO

A TYPICAL MEXICAN INTERIOR, IN THE HOME OF A WELL-TO-DO CITIZEN OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

1908, the president announced his purpose to retire after one more term, affirming that he had "waited patiently for the day" when his people would be prepared to choose and change their government at every election without danger of armed revolutions, and without injury to the national credit or interference with national progress.

The announcement struck a responsive chord, for large elements were becoming restive under the government's despotic methods. Taking the dictator at his word, various groups fell to planning to control the succession, to alter the framework of government, and to do all sorts of revolutionary things.

This was not at all to Diaz's liking. It was not flattering; besides, it foreshadowed a revival of the old conditions which had so sorely distracted the country during the mid-century period. Hence, it was soon whispered about that the president's promise to withdraw was not to be taken as final.

The plan then adopted by the opposition was to assent to Diaz's candidacy in 1910 for still another term, but to bring about the election to the vice-presidency of a man who would make a desirable successor in case the aged ruler, now approaching eighty, should die in office. General Bernardo Reyes, for twenty years governor of Nuevo Leon by Diaz's favor, was the person selected.

This scheme also failed. Its supporters were systematically driven from office, imprisoned on charges of sedition, or otherwise persecuted; and although General Reyes, scenting danger, refused to acept the proffered nomination, he was sent on a "military mission" to Europe and kept there in virtual banishment for two years.

MADERO AS LEADER OF THE LIBERALS

The movement was only temporarily checked, and presently a new leader appeared in the person of Francisco I. Madero, a member of a well-to-do family in the state of Coahuila. Madero lacked an impressive personality, and he was known to be a dreamer rather than a practical man of affairs; but in 1908 he had published a stirring pamphlet criticising the Diaz régime and urging the people to demand their right to a free ballot; and by large and irresponsible promises he rapidly gathered a formidable following. The great *haciendas,* or landed estates, were to be broken up; every peon was to have a little farm and a mule; wages were to be increased; the hold of the foreigner upon the

country's wealth was to be relaxed; political prisoners were to be liberated; the people were to be permitted to exercise the franchise without restraint; and the old rule against reelection was to be revived.

As the election of 1910 approached, the hand of the autocrat was again felt. Clubs organized to support the candidacy of Madero were put under surveillance, their meetings broken up, their newspapers suppressed. Maderistas were imprisoned by the score, and finally, just before the election, Madero was himself clapped into the penitentiary at San Luis Potosi on the charge of having "insulted the nation."

The election went off in regulation fashion. Election-booths were set up, polls were opened, votes were cast; but Federal soldiers kept close guard, and every man who voted other than the administration ticket knew that he did so at the risk of his life and property. The votes were counted in the good old way, by the government's friends, and once more the world was informed that Diaz was elected by a "practically unanimous" vote.

This was in June, 1910. In September the centennial of Mexican independence was celebrated with great display, and all the world was invited to come and see for itself the country's splendid condition and great achievements under its renowned chief magistrate. Trains to the capital bore visitors from near and far. The city—naturally one of the most beautiful in the world—was a gorgeous spectacle, flag-bedecked, and flaming by night with electric lights in red, white, and green, the national colors. "Every day of the month had its special events—brilliant receptions given to foreign delegates, historical pageants, military parades, foundings of public buildings, expositions, presentations of gifts from other nations." In the center of everything was the commanding figure of the aged president. Roses were showered into his carriage when he appeared in the streets, cries of "*Viva Don Porfirio Diaz!*" rent the air.

Two months later Madero's revolution was again in full swing. Eight months later it had swept the country and had forced Diaz from office.

THE FALL AND FLIGHT OF DIAZ

Released as being presumably harmless after the election was over, the opposition leader had forthwith organized a fresh revolt, declaring that he would never lay down his arms until Diaz should resign or a free and open presidential election should be held. At first his uprising was localized in the two northern states of Chihuahua and Durango, but in the early months of 1911 it spread rapidly southward. For a time the president professed to regard the movement lightly; but by April the ground was perceptibly slipping under his feet, and he sought to save the situation by removing the most hated members of his cabinet and substituting men of greater popularity.

It was too late. The revolution swept into every important section of the country; Congress added its voice to the public protest; the strategic city of Juarez was captured by the insurgents; the populace refused to be put off with promises, and stormed the government buildings, demanding an immediate resignation. With the ominous cry, "*Viva Madero! Muera Diaz!*" in his ears, the old man bowed to the inevitable, and on May 25 renounced his office. Fleeing to Vera Cruz, under guard of General Huerta, he took passage for Europe, never again to set foot on American soil. His last days were spent in Paris, where he died in 1915.

Diaz's exit from the theater of Mexican politics marked the end of an era. What came after is only too well known to the American people — brigandage, disorder, civil war, foreign controversy, stagnation, and despair—almost a decade of it, and the end not yet in sight.

The dictator-president was by no means above just criticism as a ruler. Though of humble birth, he had no confidence in the ability of the people to rule themselves. He made no effort to cultivate their capacity for self-government, and he totally failed to build up an adequate system of general education. He was blind to the fact that the *cientifico* principles, based on government by an oligarchy, were out of harmony with the growing democracy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Not only did he permit public affairs to be controlled by a small group of professional politicians who maintained their position by the support of the army, but he made little effort to curb or stop the insufferable abuses of which his agents and supporters were guilty. He accepted the iniquitous land system as a part of the natural order of things, and to the end remained deaf to the cry of the overburdened

A STREET SCENE IN THE CITY OF MEXICO AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF FEBRUARY, 1913, IN WHICH PRESIDENT MADERO WAS OVERTHROWN—THE SHOT-TORN BUILDING IN THE BACKGROUND IS THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

From a copyrighted photograph by Underwood & Underwood, New York

peon. He did wonders for the financial and commercial interests of his people, but he fell short of the highest statesmanship by failing to lead them along the paths of intellectual, political, and moral progress; and it may be admitted that the ground-swell of popular discontent which eventually toppled his system into the dust was justifiable and inevitable.

None the less, the period of Diaz was the happiest that Mexico has known since white men first came into the country, and nothing is so sorely needed there to-day as a leader of similar qualities. Only in strong hands will the nation ever acquire the stability and discipline necessary to fit it finally for genuinely democratic government.

EIGHT YEARS OF DISORDER IN MEXICO

Catchwords will serve as well as paragraphs to bring to mind the unhappy succession of events that makes up the political history of Mexico in the past eight years—the election of Francisco Madero to the presidency in October, 1911, by methods not very different from those formerly employed in behalf of Diaz; the collapse of Madero's government in 1913, under the impact of a revolution led by Felix Diaz, nephew of the ex-president, and General Victoriano Huerta, commander-in chief of the Federal army; Huerta's assumption of a provisional presidency, and Madero's mysterious death five days afterward; entrance of the field against Huerta by General Venustiano Carranza, governor of Coahuila, aided by a former bandit, Francisco Villa; Huerta's resignation and flight to Europe in midsummer, 1914; Carranza's establishment in the capital, although now actively opposed in the field by Villa; the promulgation of a new national constitution in 1917, under which Carranza was elected president for a four-year term; the continuance of factional contests and intermittent civil war, mainly although not exclusively between the Carranzistas and the Villistas, down to the moment when these words were written.

GENERAL ALVARO OBREGON, WHO IS REGARDED AS THE ABLEST OF PRESIDENT CARRANZA'S LIEUTENANTS

From a photograph by the Central News Photo Service

The very mention of these events and conditions calls up familiar aspects and turns of the policy of our own country toward our distracted neighbor—President Taft's mobilization of regulars on the Rio Grande in 1911; his recognition of the Madero government; President Wilson's refusal to recognize Huerta, and his adoption of "watchful waiting"; the Tampico incident of 1914; the occupation of Vera Cruz by General Funston; the unsuccessful attempts of the A B C powers and the United States to mediate; General Pershing's punitive expedition of 1916; the mobilization of the militia on the border; the final recognition of Carranza as legitimate president and the renewal of diplomatic relations; not to mention the innumerable inquiries, protests, and expostulations arising from repeated injuries to Americans in person and property.

Carranza's initial triumphs occurred during the troubled weeks while Europe hovered on the brink of the great war, and in so far as Mexico's attitude toward the con-

flict was determined by any one man, Carranza was responsible for it. That attitude was officially one of strict neutrality, but actually one of deep sympathy with the Central Powers. From the beginning the country was a fruitful field for German propaganda; and until the German campaign overreached itself in the Zimmerman note to Bernstorff, proposing a Mexican-Japanese attack on the United States, Mexican distrust of the Entente nations and of their later cobelligerent, the United States, was cultivated assiduously.

Great Britain was disliked because she had recognized Huerta, and was known to have urged the United States to support him. France was disliked because of her complaints about losses suffered by her investors. The United States was hated because of the Pershing expedition, and was suspected of a design to dismember the country. On the other hand, Germany, having scarcely any money invested in Mexican railways, mines, or plantations, had had little occasion to complain or threaten; it was easy for her to pose as the Mexicans' only true friend among the powers. Furthermore, that Germany would win the war, no Mexican seems, during the first three years, to have doubted.

The upshot was that while most of the Latin-American republics either openly declared war on the side of the Allies, or expressed their sympathy with the cause for which they were fighting, Mexico — notwithstanding that she had just passed through a revolution whose professed aim was to do away with autocratic government—stood stiffly aloof.

She could plausibly argue that her internal condition would not permit her to give substantial aid to the Allied cause, and that, therefore, nothing was to be gained, while for her something would be lost, by an alinement with Germany's foes. The decision, none the less, cost her the great moral advantage that would have come from an unequivocal avowal of the cause of freedom. Besides, it would have been worth while to remember that the republic's dealings in years to come must be principally with the nations with which she now refused to strike hands.

GENERAL FRANCISCO VILLA, THE IRREPRESSIBLE CHIEFTAIN OF THE REBELS AND RAIDERS OF NORTHERN MEXICO

From a photograph by the Central News Service

What of the country's development at home during the five years of Carranza's control? To answer this question, even tentatively, it is necessary to call to mind certain great problems which Diaz left unsolved, and to which every successive revolutionary leader—Madero, Huerta, Carranza, even Villa and Zapata—has professed to be prepared to give his best thought and effort.

THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF MEXICO

The first of these problems is the development of social and national solidarity, and, in particular, the building up of an intelligent middle class. The people of Mexico are not, as is commonly supposed, a mixed Spanish-Indian race, with the Iberian strain predominating. On the

contrary, the population of the republic is composed of the following elements:

About one million people of pure European—chiefly Spanish—descent.

About two millions of mixed descent, the so-called mestizos.

About thirteen million pure-blooded Indians, most of whom live in just as primitive fashion as did their progenitors when Cortez landed.

To these cleavages on racial lines are added profound differences of economic status. The few rich are very rich and the many poor are wretchedly poor; no considerable body of moderately well-to-do people is interposed to bridge the gap and temper the contrast. Land reform, industrial development, education—these are but a few of the means by which the population might, in a generation or two, be knit into a solid and reasonably homogeneous nationality.

The second problem is the development of a wholesome political life. For three hundred years the people of Mexico knew only the arbitrary rule of the viceroys of Spain; and although they have now lived almost a century under a republican constitution, they have never learned, and indeed seem incapable of learning, what constitutional, representative government is and how to use it. They have the form, but the spirit entirely eludes them.

The great bulk of the Indian and mestizo population, illiterate and ignorant, are content to accept the rule of any man or group of men that makes an impressive display of force. They regard the constitution as an instrument made chiefly to be suspended, despotism as a necessary mark of strong government, Congress as a hand-picked body of men charged with registering the will of the president, elections as a curious and roundabout method of getting the government's friends into the offices. Hanging or shooting, without any elaborate preliminary inquiries as to its justice or otherwise, is the method of government that everybody understands, and expects.

The mass of the people have little or no part in government. Although there is legally no distinction of races, political control is almost entirely in the hands of descendants of the Spanish settlers, together with a few of the wealthier and better-educated mestizos.

Politics, furthermore, is essentially a personal matter in Mexico, and parties take their names, not from principles, but from leaders—the Maderistas, the Carranzistas, the Zapatistas, and other "istas" *ad infinitum*. The Mexican "sees in the success of an opponent not the triumph of a principle, or of a particular school of political thought, but the victory of an individual, whom he feels himself justified in circumventing by any means in his power, including personal violence. A defeat at the polls is, in his opinion, ample justification for him to attempt to secure by force of arms what he has failed to achieve by arguments or votes. Political animosity becomes an acute personal grievance, which he pursues with the intensity and ferocity of a vendetta, regardless of its effect upon the public welfare."

THE CURSE OF PEONAGE

The third great problem is the reform of the land system and the abolition or amelioration of peonage. There are a few districts, such as the northern part of the state of Puebla, where the tillable land is cut up into tiny farms; but elsewhere it is divided into great *haciendas*, of which many represent estates granted to Spaniards centuries ago. These holdings are often of enormous extent, and it is the pride of their owners to hand them down from generation to generation undiminished.

In the highlands these *haciendas* are devoted chiefly to the growth of the peculiar variety of cactus from which pulque, the national beverage, is made; in the *tierra caliente*, or hot land along the coasts, to the production of sugar and coffee. On all, the labor is performed by peons, under the direction of foremen representing the owner.

Peonage is the country's major curse. At its best it is a labor system under which the worker becomes a landless, dependent wage-earner, with practically no chance to improve his lot or that of those dependent upon him. At its worst it is slavery, pure and simple; and it is more often seen in this phase than at its best.

The peon engages to work on a big plantation, and begins by buying his tools and supplies from the owner, to whom he thus becomes indebted. He procures his simple clothing and much of his food in the same way. Probably he borrows a sum on which to marry, and then food and clothing must be bought for his wife and children. He is bound to work until he extinguishes these

THE SMOLDERING CIVIL WAR IN MEXICO—INSURGENT FOLLOWERS OF GENERAL EMILIANO ZAPATA, WHO THREE TIMES OCCUPIED THE CITY OF MEXICO DURING 1914 AND 1915, AND WHO STILL HOLDS OUT AGAINST CARRANZA IN THE SOUTH

THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE OVER THE RIO GRANDE BETWEEN EL PASO, TEXAS, AND THE MEXICAN TOWN OF JUAREZ, WHICH APPEARS IN THE BACKGROUND

From a copyrighted photograph by the Western Newspaper Union, New York

obligations; the owner, or his representative, keeps the books, reckons up the interest charges, and sees to it that little or nothing remains due the laborer.

Every year the latter gets deeper into the mire; he rarely or never sees money; if he runs away he is arrested and handed back to his master. So long as he owes a single peso, he is tied body and soul to the estate on which he lives—usually, of course, the estate on which he was born, and on which his ancestors have similarly toiled through long generations.

Two-thirds, or more, of the country's population is in this unhappy situation; and it is small wonder that when Madero proclaimed his intention to break up the *haciendas,* and to give every peon some land and a mule of his own, the luckless peasantry flocked to his standard and enabled him to overthrow Diaz. The bitter disappointment that flowed from his failure to redeem his rash promises lies at the root of the national disorders of the past eight years. Almost every revolutionary leader who has ever succeeded in securing a following sufficient to unseat his predecessor and place himself at the head of the government has given prominence in his program to distribution of land among the common people; but as yet no successful and lasting effort has been made to accomplish this desirable end.

Mexico's potential wealth in agriculture is immense. As a recent writer points out, Spain, with similar conditions of soil, climate, and topography, supports, in an area one-fourth that of Mexico, twenty-six million people. On this basis, Mexico could support one hundred millions, or more than six times her present population. Instead of suffering from a shortage of crops, she might to-day be exporting foodstuffs at heavy profit. The land system cannot be altered overnight, and the training of the peon for independent and productive farming is possibly a task of generations; but the key to Mexico's regeneration unquestionably lies in these reforms.

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS IN MEXICO

A fourth major problem is the status of foreign investments; concessions, and property, and of foreigners themselves who become residents of the country. Mexico is a land of great natural wealth; Humboldt aptly called it "the storehouse of the world." Four hundred years of intermit-

TROOPERS OF THE EIGHTH UNITED STATES CAVALRY CROSSING THE RIO GRANDE IN PURSUIT OF MEXICAN BANDITS—THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL SUCH INCIDENTS DURING THE TROUBLES ALONG THE MEXICAN BORDER

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York

tent working have only scratched the surface of the mineral deposits: millions of acres are unsurpassed for rubber-production, fruit-growing, and diversified agriculture; vast districts are adapted to cattle-ranching and sheep-grazing.

Native capital and enterprise were lacking for the development of these resources; The total investment of foreign capital in Mexico at the close of the Diaz period was not far from two billion dollars, of which more than half was American.

The fact is that foreigners have developed Mexico; have built its railroads, opened its mines, constructed and operated its factories, opened up its oil-wells, intro-

GENERAL FRANCISCO VILLA IN THE FIELD AT THE HEAD OF HIS RAIDERS—VILLA'S MOST NOTORIOUS EXPLOIT WAS HIS ATTACK ON COLUMBUS, NEW MEXICO, ON MARCH 9, 1916, WHEN EIGHT AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND NINE CIVILIANS WERE KILLED

hence, the country early became one of the world's great fields of international business enterprise. The Diaz government held out every inducement in the form of concessions; it was strong enough to guarantee the safety of investments; and the opportunity to make large profits drew in enormous amounts of American, English, French, and Belgian capital.

The English built railways and harbors, established electric power-plants, and developed the oil business. The Americans have been concerned chiefly in mining for gold, silver, and copper, but have also developed large agricultural interests. The French control the dry-goods business and dominate the cotton-mills. The Germans until lately monopolized the hardware trade, apart from mining and textile machinery. duced modern machinery and implements, and have given remunerative employment to practically all the native labor in the country, except that engaged at from fifteen to fifty cents a day on the plantations, farms, and ranches.

To carry on these great enterprises, thousands of people of foreign nationality—chiefly Americans, but many Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, and Spaniards—became residents of the country. Under Diaz they were safe; but after the outbreak of the revolution in 1911 they were defrauded, robbed, overborne, and gradually put to flight, and the status of both their persons and their property became a source of perpetual anxiety and controversy.

Carranza's government has now been in charge of the country's affairs somewhat

MEXICAN BANDITS, FOLLOWERS OF GENERAL FRANCISCO VILLA, CAPTURED BY UNITED STATES TROOPS DURING THE PUNITIVE EXPEDITION INTO MEXICO UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL PERSHING, AFTER VILLA'S RAID ON COLUMBUS, NEW MEXICO

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more than five years. What progress has it made toward the solution of these and other weighty problems—toward a restoration of the republic to the honorable position which it once occupied among the nations of the world?

VENUSTIANO CARRANZA, WHO ASSUMED POWER IN AUGUST, 1914, AS LEADER OF THE CONSTITUTIONALISTS, AND IN MAY, 1917, WAS DECLARED ELECTED PRESIDENT OF MEXICO FOR A FOUR-YEAR TERM

From a copyrighted photograph by the International Film Service, New York

WHAT IS THE TRUTH ABOUT MEXICO?

The opinions of competent observers are poles apart. On the one hand, we are told that the country is traveling fast on the road to recovery, that generally peaceful conditions prevail, that the revenues were never larger, that the followings of the revolutionary leaders are rapidly dwindling, that the army is being steadily reduced as order is reestablished.

On the other hand, we are positively assured that Mexican history since 1915 has been "an unbroken crescendo of accumulating woes," that Carranza and his adherents have destroyed the material prosperity

of the country, that they have reduced hundreds of thousands of their countrymen to starvation, that the government is grossly dishonest, that the revenues, if ample, flow from confiscation rather than just taxation, that education is well-nigh utterly neglected, that finances have never been in such a disorganized condition, and that the laws for the protection of person and property were never so poorly enforced.

The truth lies somewhere between these opposing views, and seems to run somewhat as follows:

Carranza's authority has never extended, and does not extend today, over the entire country; yet, aside from Villa, his principal rivals are dead or have lost their followings, and there is not a town of five thousand people that has not accepted his sway.

The national debt is double what it was under Diaz, and the country, practically bankrupt, cannot borrow a dollar in the money-markets of the world; yet the revenues are the largest ever known, and it is easily possible that the recent nationalization of petroleum will some day make the nation the richest in the world.

Untold destruction of life and property has resulted from the protracted disorders, and men, women, and children are still dying from starvation in Mexico; yet the country is quieter, and living conditions are more tolerable, than in Russia, Hungary, Bulgaria, and other war-swept portions of Europe.

Two-thirds of the national expenditures in 1918 went to the support of the military establishment; but the armed forces are being gradually reduced.

Peonage has not been abolished; yet increased wages are affording a new basis for personal liberty.

Political conditions are far from satisfactory; yet the revolution has been not only political but social, and political stability and enlightenment may be among the last of its fruits to be realized.

In short, it may be said that the

A SUPPLY-TRAIN OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY MOVING INTO NORTHERN MEXICO IN MARCH, 1916, AS PART OF THE PUNITIVE EXPEDITION UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL PERSHING

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MEXICAN IRREGULAR TROOPS GUARDING A STATION ON A RAILROAD NEAR THE UNITED STATES BORDER—IN THIS REGION VILLA'S RAIDERS HAVE WREAKED HAVOC ALMOST AT WILL

republic is feeling its way, blindly enough, perhaps toward a better order of things. It has an enormous distance still to go; it will not really get far until it has overcome the three great present-day abuses of banditry, graft, and lack of respect for civil rights. In particular, it must find a way to stop the dreary succession of murders, kidnapings, and other outrages that justly keeps resentment among us in the United States at a high pitch.

If it can do these things, it has nothing to fear from either the United States or the rest of the world. If it cannot, it has no right to an independent existence as a member of the family of nations, and will inevitably pass under some form of control from the outside.

No ruler of Mexico will ever be allowed to do what Emiliano Zapata used to boast that he would do when his party attained power—throw all foreigners out of the country, tear up the railroads, and restore the primitive life of ages past.

TRACKS WRECKED BY VILLA'S RAIDERS—SUCH SCENES AS THIS HAVE BEEN COMMON ON THE RAILROADS OF MEXICO DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS

Siren Cottage

BY ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

Illustrated by Gerald Leake

THE bride gave a sudden exclamation as the automobile surmounted the crest of the hill, disclosing an embowered glimpse of the house and the riot of its neglected gardens. Only the wildly yawing wheel of the little car prevented her laying an arresting hand upon that of her husband.

"My goodness!" she gasped. "How could that ever have been a workhouse? Why, it's a playhouse—a sublime, adorable playhouse! No wonder the town gave it up. It's too ridiculous—everybody would want to be a pauper!"

The words were jerked from her spasmodically as their car bucked over the ruts that had once been a road.

"It 'll cost something to put this confounded boulevard into navigable shape," said her husband, trying hard to be practical in the face of the allurement of the just-glimpsed residence.

"It's only a short quarter-mile," said the lady of his heart.

They halted before the entrance, and she jumped out. With clasped hands and shining eyes she stood admiring the gate—a wrought-iron delight, swinging invitingly ajar between two columns of brick surmounted by somewhat tipsy urns. To right and left the ornate fence swept gracefully, half lost in creepers, vines, and waves of pink climbing roses, which, unrestrained by the pruning-shears, inundated the road and paths with a spraying foam of petals. What had once been a brick walk was now a mottled bed of moss and hardy pinks. Larkspurs, with blue spikes five feet high, pushed back the advancing hollyhock armies. All the old-fashioned flowers of a hardy garden had made the lawns a battle-ground for floral supremacy, surging about the house, swarming at the windows, meeting the hosts of roses and honeysuckle that fell from roof and balcony.

The bride and the groom stood hand in hand, gazing wide-eyed at the scene before them. It was almost too wonderful, too perfect. A house of dreams—the painted back-drop of a fairy play that might at any moment roll up into the heavens and be lost to reality.

"I don't care what it's like inside," she whispered, as if afraid to break the spell. "We've *got* to have it!"

A breeze swept through the garden. The flowers bent in unison, as if in obeisance to a new mistress.

"See!" she laughed. "They are bowing to me."

"It 'll take two gardeners," said her spouse dryly.

"Oh, well," said the bride, "we'll economize on cut flowers."

"It isn't always June," he retorted.

They relapsed into silence as they walked on and paused before the front door. He fumbled in his pocket for the key that the selectman had given him; but the bride pressed a slender hand on the panels and it swung softly, almost gaily, open. The sunlight, running ahead of them, gold-flecked the dust that the incoming breeze tossed from the inlaid floor.

"They really ought to keep a caretaker here," she said. "Just think, the house all open like that! Why, tramps might be living here and set the place on fire."

He laughed.

"Nonsense! The place is too far out of the way. Why, we'd never have heard of it if it hadn't been for the Follensbees losing their way and blundering over it."

"I don't care," she repeated. "There ought to be a caretaker. It's a shame to leave a house like this all alone. I'm sure all the hardware's been stolen and the plumbing."

"Knobs are on the doors, anyway," he answered, and turned the nearest one.

Even with closed blinds and bare walls, the room they entered was merry. A great colonial fireplace still sheltered a pair of brass andirons, and the half-burned remains of a back-log suggested the glow of fire.

"It's perfectly ducky!" cried the bride, dancing on happy feet across the polished floor. "Just think of this with dove-colored taffeta curtains with little yellow fringes, old settees between the windows, a pair of powder-blue Chinese vases on the mantel, a big *chaise-longue* in front, and a refectory table back—"

"Hold on there, girly!" objected the groom. "You didn't marry a millionaire, you know."

"Oh, well," she pouted, "we'll do it a little at a time. Of course, with the whole house to furnish, we couldn't expect to go so fast; but with two gardeners, as you said, and a chauffeur who'd help generally, and a couple—Japanese, I think—a man and wife, and they'll wear their own kimono clothes—they'll look so picturesque, you know! And then we'll put a truck body on Lizette de Fer Blanc, and use her for service, and get a new little car for just us two, and fix up the road for a half-mile or so as you suggested. Don't you think we ought to be able to take possession in two or three weeks?"

She stopped, breathless. He was gravely considering.

"If the rent wasn't so small, it would be out of the question; and we ought to take it on a long lease, anyhow, to make it worth our while. It isn't of any use to the township. Somebody gave it to them for a workhouse, and they got into it before they saw how unpractical it was. They were awfully out of pocket trying to run it. The matron and the supervisor simply threw money away. But as a renting proposition it isn't any good, either—too far from the station, and no neighbors. Lots of people don't like that."

"Ah, but *we* do!" said the bride, slipping her arm through his and rubbing her cheek on his shoulder.

He kissed her enthusiastically, then dutifully dug into his wallet for the typewritten description of the premises.

"Let's see—six master's bedrooms, three baths, three servants' bedrooms and bath, chauffeur's apartment over garage, room for three cars, two box-stalls—"

"Splendid!" she interrupted. "We can keep a couple of ponies, and ride."

"Wouldn't you like kennels, too?" he inquired scathingly.

"Oh, no," she regretfully declined. "I'll just bring my two Pekingese. We couldn't afford a kennel-maid—yet."

She had raised a window and was busy with the catch of the shutters. A moment later the casement framed a picture of garden beauty. The fresh morning light, as if glad of the chance, flashed into the long-darkened room, bringing out the details of moldings and pilasters, delicately carved with sumptuous simplicity.

"I don't feel," she cried rapturously, "that I ever want to go anywhere again! I want to stay here—right now. I don't want to leave. I think I'll take the cushions out of Lizette's back and let you go to the village and sign the lease, and bring back a pound of coffee, a loaf of bread, one dozen eggs, some sugar—there's pepper and salt and tea in the motor kit—and two pillows and a couple of blankets."

"Let's get the water turned on first, my dear," he sugested; "and let's look over the lighting system. The telephone is in, but it's disconnected. And don't you think that you, as the lady of the house, ought to investigate the kitchen?"

"This house couldn't have just a kitchen—a mere kitchen!" exclaimed the bride. "A cooking parlor it shall be, with lovely copper and aluminum, all glass and enamel and tile, shiny and clean. Won't it be fun? And I'll put the cook out and get your early breakfast for you myself—oh, yes, I will," she insisted, anticipating her husband's refusal of such menial service.

He only smiled, but with undisconcerted ardor she continued:

"Dearest angel, do you realize that we've been standing here hours, and we've been in just one room? We've got to visit it all. Let's see, the plan said, 'A drawing-room, a dining-room, a music-room'—"

"I *know* this is the music-room. I can hear dance-music, and just feel this floor! Tra-la-la!" she trilled, and, thrusting her husband's arm around her waist, she urged him off down the room.

She was right; the room responded to its appointed destiny. The whole house seemed to hum with music, as a shell holds the sound of the sea. The floor sent back a spring of living wood to the quick young tread of the lovers who glided over it. At the door she stopped.

"The dining-room now," she whispered

"I DON'T CARE WHAT IT'S LIKE INSIDE," SHE WHISPERED, AS IF AFRAID TO BREAK THE SPELL. "WE'VE GOT TO HAVE IT!"

in his ear. "I'm sure we shall find a banquet. There'll be the ghost of a sideboard—and cold chicken, stuffed mangoes, and a decanter of sherry; and there'll be little biscuits and a big Virginia ham—"

"If you don't stop," said the groom, his mouth watering, "I sha'n't be satisfied with your imaginary lunch, and we've only got tongue sandwiches, so let's take in the sitting-room instead."

They turned around, their arms still about each other, and faced the wraith of a little worn, gray man. He came noiselessly from the door opposite, and his wistful, washed-out eyes sought their faces with compassion, and yet with a certain glittering hardness.

II

THE bride and the groom stood speechless, like children caught trespassing. Anything more out of key with the joyousness of the place it would be hard to imagine. If this was its familiar spirit, its manifestation was strangely at variance

with the surroundings. No wreck of humanity stranded on a park bench in some livid dawn could be more worn, more hopeless-looking, more dreary-eyed.

Panic seized them both. The bride gripped her husband's shoulder convulsively, and with a sense of protection totally uncalled for he swiftly drew her behind him. In a flash the instinctive fear passed. Of what had they been afraid? Of a little old man, diffident, deprecating, and compassionate?

"You came to see the house?"

The voice was broken and old, deprecating and diffident, the perfect expression of the dejected little figure. The intruders found footing on the instant, and the groom's reply sounded loud and important in the echoing hall.

"Yes, Selectman Williams gave me the key and a plan of the house. We were talking of leasing it for a term of years. Who are you?" He added as an afterthought, "the caretaker?"

"I thought," observed the bride wisely, thrusting back a copper-colored curl under her lavender motor-veil, "that they really couldn't have left the place with no one in charge. My husband was just wondering about the water-supply—perhaps you could tell him about it?"

A grim smile drew up the corners of the old man's withered mouth.

"I could, of course," he replied. "There isn't a thing about the place that I don't know; but it isn't worth while to go into all that. You aren't going to take it."

It was said with such finality that the young people stared at him, for the moment dumb. Then the husband flushed angrily.

"The caretaker's job must be a soft one for you to be so high-handed," he remarked with a sneer. "However, we needn't involve you in our plans. Come, Trudy, we'll investigate the rest of the house."

"You will find it all charming, literally charming," said the soft, gray voice. "There isn't a room that won't attract you; there isn't an outlook that won't appeal to you. But, just the same, you can't stay here."

The sheer impertinence shocked the home-seekers into silence. The groom reddened, but the bride went pale. Something like the distant warning tinkle of a spirit-bell thrilled through her sensitive being.

"You aren't the caretaker!" she said suddenly. "Why do you say we mustn't stay? Who are you?"

The derelict met her gaze with tragic earnestness.

"I'm Morton Ford, if that means anything to you."

She looked blank, but her husband swung around, astonishment written large on his handsome face.

"Morton Ford!" he exclaimed. "That's the name of the donor. I saw it in the selectman's office—the man who gave the town this property for a poorhouse."

"Yes," said Morton Ford quietly.

"Why," the young man continued as one bewildered, "I thought, of course, you were dead! Who would give away such a place as this—and for such a purpose? It—it's incredible!"

"In a sense, I am dead." Ford addressed the bride directly, as if of the two she were the more likely to understand him. "And, as you say, I gave the house for a purpose. The town has not seen fit to continue to use the house as I intended. I did not give it to them to augment the town revenues; it is expressly stated so in my deed of gift. Therefore, if you make it necessary, I shall have to contest the lease."

"But why be a dog in the manger?" the would-be tenant objected. "They can't afford to run it as a workhouse. They told me so. The place involved the whole township in debt. If they can make something on it, why not let them? They're badly in the hole as it is."

"In the first place," said the former owner grimly, "I intend to punish this house. I intend to cripple it utterly; but, beyond that, I will not expose you or any other honest people to its cunning. I tell you this house is a devil—a living devil. It's a siren, a vampire, a blood-sucking, soul-destroying thing. Oh, I know her! She's not a thing of stones and mortar, wood and plaster. She's got a sort of evil life. She'd wreck you, as she wrecked me and my happiness, as she destroyed the man who made her."

He was shaking with excitement. His pale face was streaked with sudden red, his bony hands were clenched.

"He's mad," thought the husband, and again sought to draw his wife behind him.

He had not spoken, but his wife read his thoughts.

"No," she said steadily, "he isn't. Please, Mr. Ford, explain it, will you? We—just don't seem to understand. It's strange, you see. We thought the house so

lovely. It's so sunny, so gay. Why, any one should be happy here. It's — it's heavenly!"

"Will you come?" With a quivering finger Morton Ford pointed up the graceful stairway to the wide landing above. "Perhaps, if I show you the place, you will understand."

He led the way to the floor above, and steadied himself for a moment with his palm against the yellow-paneled wall. Then, with a quick gesture of determination, he threw open the door of a large, cheerful bedroom. A long mirror was set in the bath-room door, and reflected the tracery of climbing roses at the unshuttered window. A heavy four-poster bed stood facing them. There was no other furniture.

"What a beautiful room!" ejaculated the bride.

"Of course you'd think so," their guide muttered grimly; "but it was there, right in front of that looking-glass, that he shot himself."

"Shot himself? Who shot himself?" demanded the groom.

"Madison, the man who built the house."

"But why?" gasped the bride.

"He was a bank cashier," Ford answered, his voice again colorless. "A bank cashier, and married to a dear little woman —it wasn't her fault. She loved him, she'd have been happy with him anywhere; but he *would* come here, he would build. Some one — his bitterest enemy, I guess — had given him a set of plans. He had a little money. It seemed all right at first; but then the house developed its soul. It's the soul of a courtezan. She is the three daughters of the horse-leech in one. She cries: 'Give, give!' Oh, you don't know! Poor Madison! He became infatuated with the house—infatuated utterly, his wife told me. It was like a madness. He couldn't resist its demands. Nothing was good enough for its beauty; nothing was rare enough. Everything that belonged to the house must be cared for and pampered—yes, pampered. Its gardens, its stables, everything—like a king's mistress, groomed and perfumed and bedecked, bejeweled and garlanded. Oh, yes, I know; but it wasn't until the malady had fallen upon me that I hunted her out—little Mrs. Madison—and found her stunned and prematurely old, living in poverty and under another name, because of her husband's theft. For he stole—of course he stole—who wouldn't? He robbed the bank for his mistress—this shameless, laughing, merry house—and then he shot himself before that mirror. And does the house care? Not at all! She was looking for her next victim before her lover's body was cold. She drank his blood into her very self, and she gives no hint of tragedy. And so I found her."

"You bought it—after that?" whispered the bride.

The old man nodded.

"Yes, and I thought I was lucky. I knew what had happened; but, like everybody else, I didn't take it to myself. Somebody else's martyrdom, somebody else's tragedy—and for that reason I could buy it cheap, just as it stood, with all its furniture. Yes, I bought the trollop, with all her gauds and her trappings and her frills and laces. I bought it for the woman I loved—for my wife. She'd had so little in her life. I was older than she, and I loved her so much that I wanted to give her the best, the loveliest, the happiest things. The house laughed and made us welcome—oh, it knows how to welcome you and envelop you in a sense of well-being. Charm, charm —that's the very corner-stone and rooftree.

"And then the creature, that is this house, cried: 'Give, give!' and I gave and gave; but it wasn't for me alone that she spread her net—oh, no! My wife was young, my wife was pretty, my wife was gay. She filled the house with music, and the house loved her. Come, I will show you her room, the lovely room that looks out on the water-garden—it is only a pond now, but it was a water-garden then. I'll show you the little boudoir she had done in saffron and rose, like the inside of a shell. I had them put the most pestilential pauper of all in that room!"

Obediently the young people followed the halting steps. Something of the enchantment of the *Ancient Mariner* held them attentive and breathless.

III

THROWING open a double door a few paces farther down the hall, Morton Ford ushered them into a long, low-ceilinged apartment. The whole of one side was composed of casement windows that went clear to the floor. Beyond was a balcony of lacy wrought-iron, and below was the lily-covered surface of a pond. Irises bloomed beside it, and azaleas crowded toward it. A willow-tree hung above, and

stroked its silver surface with long, silken fingers. On the ceiling of the room the reflection of the ripples ran in sequences of shadowy gold. A breath of perfume seemed still to cling to its rosy walls.

The bath-room beyond glittered. Small squares of inlaid glass made a diamond light above the creamy luster of the tiles. On the other side, the open door gave a glimpse of another room—doubtless the boudoir, "like a shell."

There was silence. The three visitors stood motionless. The old man's head was bent. He did not try to hide his pain; like a child he wept.

The bride put out her hand and touched his sleeve.

"What happened?" she asked softly. "The house loved her, you say. Then it wouldn't harm her, it wouldn't let her destroy herself for it. What happened?"

"The house, the—why do I call it a house? It is *not* a house. It is an evil,

living thing! It taught her all its cunning, all its ways to win, to cajole, to beg, to demand. Oh, she was an apt pupil! But I was to blame, for I should not have placed her where her soul could be poisoned. Yet how could I know?"

"I TELL YOU THIS HOUSE IS A DEVIL—A LIVING DEVIL. IT'S A SIREN, A VAMPIRE, A BLOOD-SUCKING, SOUL-DESTROYING THING"

After a momentary pause he went on.

"Together they grew in extravagance. They must be matched in perfection. And I was blind. I thought my wife the wonder of the world. Who but she could make such marvels out of a bit of lace and a scrap of linen, and hang the windows with such curtains and such draperies? The house taught her. For nothing—so I thought—she picked up priceless things, and I was proud of her cleverness and her knowledge. And all the while the devilish house was teaching her luxury, extravagance, display, opulence. At last she outdid her teacher. She wanted to put her two hands into the world's coffers and scatter its gold profligately.

"As the house increased in beauty, it made her more beautiful. As the house grew more charming, she learned the charm of Satan himself. Now, as I look back, I seem to see them vie with each other—the beautiful house and the lovely woman. And then—the world of the house, my house, grew too small, and just as heartlessly, just as lightly as the house had slain, she deserted it—and me—for greater extravagance, greater luxury, greater display. In my hour of despair the house would have taken vengeance on me because she had deserted it. The house would have made me follow in the footsteps of poor Madison; but I was not to be deceived. It tried to make me go into that room and kill myself, as the other had. The house would have sucked my blood and cast me aside, and then it would have waited, treacherously smiling and welcoming, for the next victim; but I knew its devilish soul too well.

"I determined to be revenged; so I thought of the thing most likely to infuriate the house. Poverty, age, illness, all the things the house hated — these the house should have. You begin to understand now,

don't you, why I gave the property to the town for a poorhouse, for a workhouse, where day after day, year after year these walls would have to shelter the lame and the halt and the blind, the creatures of poverty, clad in ugliness, eating the mean fare of charity, lorded over by others little better than themselves? Oh, I can feel the loathing in every stick and stone, the repugnance in every minutest detail of refinement!

"Can't you imagine the stairs creaking with shame at the lumbering and shuffling? Can't you feel the paneling drawing away from such a company? Can't you fancy how this room—this room, most of all—felt when they installed here old John Broad, the palsied, foul-mouthed drunkard? Can't you imagine the immaculate kitchen blowing back the fumes of cabbage and cheap stews? Can't you understand the hatred of the gardens as wheel-chairs plowed through them, and the weeds invaded them without let or hindrance?

"Oh, I had my vengeance on the house; but she was too clever for me. I couldn't be here to watch her, to checkmate her cunning. She even drove these cattle to extravagance—at least, to what was extravagance for them.

"A year, two, three, five, and the house expelled the inmates she loathed. She spewed them out at last, and then smoothed herself, and smiled and furbished up again each tarnished wile. She called to her charm, to her gaiety and her flowers, to the breezes and the sunlight, to the whispering, suggestive silence of her rooms, to the promise of her wide hearths, to the resonance of laughter and music that she holds in the hollow of her heart. She cast out the memories of the sounds and scents of the poor she hated, and she waited—waited for *you*. She would have welcomed you and infolded you and drawn you in, and you would have gone down her ruinous way of extravagance and luxury; but she reckoned without me.

"When I heard what had happened, I came back. When I caught the house smiling and beckoning through her desertion, I watched and waited, too. I wondered whether she was strong enough to draw fresh victims to her cruel embrace. And she is, for you came. And now you know. You think she's nothing but a house; but I know she is a devil, a vampire, a destroyer of body and soul!"

The bride shuddered, and her husband looked down at her, amused. He felt it incumbent upon him to be amused, for he was shaken.

"Well," he said, "that's very interesting, and in a way I think you're right. The house is far too large for us."

The old man smiled. They did not speak again for many minutes.

On the veranda, as they took their leave, the groom condescended to speak more graciously to the old man.

"Of course, sir, I'm greatly obliged for your warning, but really, you know, there wasn't any danger of our taking the place. It's charming, as you say, but—well, quite beyond our means."

The bride looked up gravely and held out her hand.

"Thank you ever so much," she said simply. "You're quite right, and I'm very grateful. We must be going. Can we give you a lift—take you anywhere?"

Ford shook his head.

"No, I thank you. I'm not the caretaker, you see, though I am a watchman. Good-by, my dear. God keep you!"

The bride looked over her shoulder as they topped the hill. Below them lay the tangled garden, the shimmer of the pond, the inviting expanse of the house, cream-white in its setting of green. On the steps was a splotch of gray—the huddled figure of the watcher.

"Bughouse, poor old boy!" said the groom. "But, after all, there's something in what he says about biting off more than one can chew. Considerable of a yarn, that. Wonder if there's any basis of truth for it—all that about the suicide, and his wife eloping, I mean."

The bride did not answer. For the first time since the all-important ceremony she was totally oblivious of the words of her lord and master. To her eyes the vision of home had suddenly shown itself a whited sepulcher, and more—a vampire, reaching out to seize her. And because she was a woman, and, therefore, subconsciously aware of many things, she shuddered as with cold and drew her veil more closely about her.

"Oh, what an escape!" she murmured, "what an escape!"

Her husband laughed. "You weren't afraid of him, were you? Why, the poor old chap was perfectly harmless."

Calvin Coolidge, a Typical New-Englander

THE PERSONALITY OF THE GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS, WHOSE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BOSTON POLICE STRIKE HAS BEEN SO STRONGLY INDORSED BY THE VOTERS OF HIS STATE

By Samuel Spring

ARTEMUS WARD, whose homespun humor cheered Lincoln in the darkest days of the Civil War, said of George Washington, with terse vividness, that "he never slopped over." It was the finest thing Artemus ever said. To those who watch aspiring men on the public stage, this one phrase comes near being both the highest encomium and the finest plan of action possible.

As one views Calvin Coolidge, in victory as well as in trial, he, perhaps, of all public figures to-day, best deserves that high praise. It seems to fit him with startling neatness. No wonder, therefore, that in these perilous, unsteady times, when a cool head, a clear eye, and a firm, even hand are needed at every turn, his friends are speaking of him as a Presidential possibility—a Presidential certainty, some go so far as to say.

I say his friends; for, considering the bitterness of the struggle he has been through, he has singularly few enemies. As for Calvin Coolidge himself, he is saying nothing at all about the Presidency. That is not his way of doing things. He is not slopping over. In his simple, direct way he is devoting his entire time and thought to the job he has on his hands—governing the industrial commonwealth of Massachusetts and leading New England through the mazes of reconstruction.

Not a few men can keep their heads under severe strain and trial; but only few can keep their heads under the high glamour of victory. A worthy and brave mayor of a Western city, as soon as he found himself applauded, set out to follow Cæsar and reestablish the world. The thing that best typifies Coolidge's character is the humble way in which he received the great victory he achieved.

When the Boston police crisis occurred, Coolidge was prepared. He was scrupulously careful to respect law and order by not exceeding the powers of his office. He showed that he considered the police commissioner of Boston a responsible public official, not a rubber stamp; he was as jealous of Mayor Peters's rights as the mayor was himself.

He did not rush in and violate the law. When the responsibility was finally passed to him, he accepted it quickly, cheerfully, quietly. He did not indulge in any public apologies or threats or prayers. He immediately picked out the only issue that really was vital—the right of public officials to strike. When the correct time came, he called the strike a desertion; not with rasping bitterness, or fanfare of wrath, but with calm precision, like a physician discovering a disease and determining the remedy. He issued a proclamation, aptly and cogently summarizing and defining the entire issue. He took his stand upon the rock of Massachusetts institutions.

"Have faith in Massachusetts," he told his fellow citizens.

He never doubted or stormed or despaired, for he himself had faith. Compromise was suggested in the great drama behind the scenes that took place in conference after conference between Governor, mayor, police commissioner, citizens' committee, and representatives of the police. From the standpoint of political expediency,

CALVIN COOLIDGE, ELECTED GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS IN 1918 BY A PLURALITY OF SEVENTEEN THOUSAND, AND REELECTED LAST NOVEMBER, CHIEFLY ON THE ISSUE OF HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BOSTON POLICE STRIKE, BY A PLURALITY OF MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY THOUSAND

From a copyrighted photograph by Notman, Boston

it might have seemed wise to take back the striking policemen and leave the question of unionizing to the voters. Such a compromise was suggested by timid people; but the Governor determined that he was confronted with a duty, not a political problem, and scorned to deviate one hairbreadth from his duty.

A TRUE SON OF NEW ENGLAND

He acted like a true son of New England. The obligation of office was sacred to him, as it always has been to the sons of the Puritans.

In his angular unimpressiveness, his deliberate coolness, his high and unflinching sense of public duty, Calvin Coolidge stands out as the clear example of the New-Englander. He has rugged, unyielding strength rather than deft, attractive suavity of speech and action. He is not impressive on the platform. He does not overwhelm or fascinate or frighten.

When he was first elected Governor a year ago by a slender plurality over an opposing candidate who made large promises, not a few Republicans felt that they had a safe but not an outstanding Governor, a steady, uninteresting, and not too inspiring leader. There was nothing spectacular about him. He had advanced steadily from office to office—first city solicitor of Northampton, then member of the State Legislature, then mayor of Northampton, then Senator, then president of the Senate, then Lieutenant-Governor, and finally, by right of succession, Governor. Where else but in New England could you find such a methodical record of progress, slow but sure?

Every job Calvin Coolidge had held he had filled with unfaltering ability, but without display. He has a world of loyal friends, but not many overenthusiastic admirers. Indeed, as in the case of many New-Englanders, Coolidge and enthusiasm are not intimate companions. He does not agree with Rousseau that "nothing great is ever done without enthusiasm." He believes in approaching every issue calmly, with serene intellectual power and a high sense of duty. Once he has grasped his duty, nothing else matters.

Duty! Who has not spoken of that as the great passion of the New-Englander? And who is more worthy of the mantle of John Quincy Adams than Calvin Coolidge? Adams had been ambassador in Europe, Secretary of State, President of the United States; but when he felt that duty bade him fight slavery, he unflinchingly went to the House of Representatives, accepted the wrath of Boston—which deemed him merely a trouble-maker—and year after year, in the face of the taunts and scorn of the fiery Southerners, offered petition upon petion to end slavery, although Congress denied him the right even of submitting his petitions. Following the dictates of duty, ignoring the high dignity he could have enjoyed, and finally dropping dead on the floor of the House in the midst of the fight that his conscience bade him carry on, the "old man eloquent" is enshrined in history as one of the most glorious of American heroes.

Of the same stuff Calvin Coolidge is made. His strength lies not in enthusiasm or imagination or fire; but if the times call for a clear-seeing executive who is needed to do an exacting, perilous task with quiet precision, Calvin Coolidge is the man.

COOLIDGE AS A PUBLIC SPEAKER

As a public speaker he shows the same characteristics. He talks quietly, calmly, directly. There is even a twang to his speech. At first you feel a little disappointed, and wonder if this man can be a leader. Then you find yourself listening and — marvel of marvels — thinking! It makes no difference whether you are a professional man or a laborer, a man of affairs or a shopkeeper, a dreamer or a cynic, you slowly come to the conclusion that the Governor is not talking through his hat. You realize that he is not a man to waste words —that he has carefully pondered upon all that he has said.

Lacking all the arts of an orator, Coolidge has the highest quality of a stylist—precise terseness. He is master of the epigram. He crowds principles of life and government into the confines of a brief, sharply cut, highly polished sentence.

His speeches read infinitely better than they sound. At one time the English applauded Sheridan's speeches, but read and pondered over Burke's. So, in New England, they read and reread all that the Governor says, and no public man finds a wider and more attentive audience.

Coolidge carefully prepares all his speeches, and does not trust to the feeling of the moment as an inspiration to say a few banal commonplaces. He never speaks without

thinking long and carefully over the subject he has to deal with. He is a reader. He knows his history. Rome and Carthage are not empty names to him; they stand for definite things.

He has all the power and few of the defects of a scholar and a thinker. He is practical, vigorous, direct. His lack of enthusiasm and passion is perhaps an asset in these tumultuous days. He is the sort of speaker who makes men think, and stirs them to deeply determined action.

A MAN READY AT THE CALL OF DUTY

During the crises of American life New England's high and flaming sense of public duty has often been the guiding light of the nation. And abiding faith in a few fundamental principles of political action—liberty with order, justice with patience, aspiration founded on self-sacrifice, progress without turmoil—has come to be the very blood and bone of your New-Englander. He feels the need of these principles of life, because they are entwined about every fiber of his being. The struggles that made these principles possible are still real to him, not merely historical.

As a rule, he does not care to be magnetic, suave; he does not seek to capture the imagination of his fellow citizens; he is content even to be somewhat distant, angular, cold. He aspires simply to be right, to do his duty, and to assuage the inner fire of his conscience.

Of this clear-eyed, old-fashioned New England type is Calvin Coolidge. The Boston police affair was not merely a lucky episode which he met successfully by chance and good fortune. He did not go a step out of his way to put himself in the public eye. When the opportunity came, he grasped it. When the difficulty confronted him, he overcame it. Difficulties are the strong man's opportunities, and Calvin Coolidge rose to the occasion because of his innate strength. Years of quiet living and high thinking had schooled him for the task.

With the rugged simplicity and stern determination of his Americanism, he stands to-day before his fellow citizens. If they need him, he is ready. He is big enough for any job, but too conscientious to be swayed by hunger for any office.

"I shall enter on no encomium on Massachusetts," said Daniel Webster. "She needs none. There she is!"

And the same calm words can be said of Calvin Coolidge.

SOMETHING LEFT TO DO

NEAR the set of sun, you say;
Little left of the long day—
Nothing more for me and you
  But to take farewell—
  Hark, the passing bell!
Yet is something left to do.

Something kind that we forgot,
  Something we may yet amend,
  Some new beginning, at the end;
Something we were not,
  But were meant to be,
  Still is left for you and me.

Maybe but a friendly hand
  To an old-time foe,
  Outstretched ere we go—
He will understand;
  A smile long overdue,
A kiss too long delayed,
  But not too late yet;
One flash ere we fade,
  Forgotten—and forget!

Richard Le Gallienne

The Looter

BY DALE CURRAN

MR. NICHOLL quietly opened his bedroom door and stepped out into the hall, pajama-clad. He closed the door behind him; he sent a challenging roar into the darkness.

"Hey, you! Come out o' that!"

There came the sound of cautious footsteps and the fall of an overturned chair. Then a surprised voice ventured a tentative "Hello!"

"Who are you? What are you doing there?"

Nicholl's voice had power and volume; it jarred windows and aroused respect. The presence in the darkness moved slowly toward him.

"I'm only a burglar," the voice explained in an aggrieved tone. "I'm coming out right away."

The street-lamp without sent yellow light fanwise through the center of the spacious hall, bringing objects into sharp relief of light and darkness, without giving illumination enough for details. The burglar stopped just outside the band of light, his left arm across his face, his right apparently tying something behind his head.

Nicholl stepped back out of the light. The burglar stepped forward and stopped beside a big Morris chair, dropping his hands. The lower half of his face was covered by the regulation handkerchief mask. He held out both his hands, palms up, for inspection.

"I don't carry a gun, and I forgot to bring my flash-light," he ventured apologetically; "but I really am a burglar, just the same."

Nicholl grunted. His grunt carried weight in the offices of Nicholl & Co., wholesalers, and it rather seemed to disconcert the burglar, who twisted uneasily and tried to look convincing.

"Burglar! Huh!" Nicholl exploded. "Have you taken anything?"

"The sideboard was— I beg your pardon. No, I haven't taken a thing. I was just on my way up-stairs, though," he added hopefully.

"Infernal chump!" said Nicholl. "I won't waste time with you, young man. I'm going to call up the police."

The burglar jumped in astonishment and alarm.

"Oh, you surely wouldn't think of doing that, sir?"

"Why not?"

Here was ground for discussion, something tangible. The intruder leaned an elbow on the big chair-back and tallied on his fingers.

"Oh, I can give you at least five good reasons why you shouldn't."

"Like thunder you can!"

Apparently taking this as acquiescence, the burglar straightened up and launched his argument.

"My first plan, sir, if you don't mind, was to seize you violently, tie you up, and make my escape with my loot. Would that be all right?"

Nicholl thrust forward the pocket of his pajama-coat. His hand was in that pocket, and in his hand was something big and long and metal-hard. Its cylindrical end, pointed toward the burglar, was unnaturally steady.

"Would it?" he asked.

The burglar swallowed twice in quick succession, but stood his ground.

"Er—well, no," he answered. "But I might appeal to your sense of humor," he went on, brightening. "Imagine how you'll enjoy telling the story of the burglar you caught; how you discussed the matter with him and let him go. What a yarn that would make! And then the anticlimax if you have to relate that the chief character eventually goes to jail!"

"Nothing doing," said Nicholl in a displeased voice. "Talk faster, or you'll start right now."

"Then I might appeal to your hospitality," the young man went on, somewhat

dashed, but still hopeful. "Speed the parting guest, and so on. Surely I've furnished enough pleasant conversation to insure me safe-conduct to the gate?"

He noted storm-signals in Nicholl's eyebrows, and went on without waiting for an answer.

"But I would rather you gave me your sympathy, sir. Up to this time I have been poor but honest, and I am still poor. I was forced into a life of crime. My wife and children—"

"Will you saw off that line and tell me the truth, or must I ring for the wagon?" Nicholl grated. "I'm tired of chewing the rag out here in the dark."

"Certainly, sir," said the burglar politely. "I'll be glad to tell the truth if necessary. In fact, I had been saving it for my last argument. It's like this—you have a daughter, sir."

"Huh!" Nicholl snorted.

"A charming daughter," the burglar went on, not at all set back. "Your daughter some time ago fell in love with a certain young man who had loved her just about twice that long. The affair progressed. They—er—became engaged."

He paused and looked uncertainly at Nicholl. Certainly the man was not smiling; but what was he doing, then?

"The young man came to ask your blessing," he went on, somewhat bolder. "You refused to grant it. Came a day—"

"Hey?" said Nicholl incredulously.

"Came a day," the burglar repeated firmly; "a day when they two could wait no longer. They decided to elope. They did elope."

"What's this?" roared Nicholl, making as if to spring upon the burglar and tear him apart.

"One moment," said the other, holding up a detaining hand. "I'll explain."

Nicholl glowered.

"Go ahead and explain," he said ominously.

"They eloped. They got as far as the corner, when your daughter found that she had forgotten the hand-bag she had spent the afternoon in packing. The young man went back to get it. He was so clumsy as to step on the cat, while—but, Mr. Nicholl!"

But Mr. Nicholl had gone back into his bedroom and shut the door.

"Are you going to call the police?" the young man asked plaintively. "Anyway, I haven't finished my story."

"Yes, you have," Nicholl growled from within the door. Then he opened it a bit and put his head out. "You have the gift of talk, all right, Charlie," he said. "Maybe I can use you in the office. When you go out, tell that silly girl to come back and go to bed. You come around and see me to-morrow. Maybe I'll give you a job and a blessing. Now get out!"

THE SKY-LINE

Across the morning fields I see
  Where dawn has made in silhouette
The old familiar symmetry
  Of tower and parapet.

Against the glory of the sky
  The roofs stand out as black as ink;
The spires and factory-chimneys high
  Are shafts of jet, I think.

At evening it will not be so,
  For, kindling with the sun's red pyre,
The walls will answer to the glow,
  The windows will be fire.

Such possibilities it holds!
  It draws my thoughts to things above;
Such inspiration it infolds—
  The sky-line that I love!

Elizabeth Crawford

The Education of Archibald

BY CLARENCE MEILY

Illustrated by W. B. King

ON a June morning, when a moist and leaden sky hung ominously above the streets of Los Angeles, the denizens of that celestial community, or some of them, beheld a sedate and elongated gentleman of thirty-five threading his way along the sidewalk. His apparel—a gray business suit, carefully fitted and smoothly pressed, with white spats, stiff hat and ribboned eyeglasses—betrayed the Eastern professional man. He carried a silk umbrella rolled with exactness around a monogrammed handle of ebony and gold. It was altogether a very creditable umbrella, reflecting a gracious but superfluous distinction upon its owner, who now and again cast an apprehensive eye aloft, as if debating whether to unfurl it now or to tempt the elements a few dissolute moments longer. His pale, aristocratic features, his precisely plastered blond hair, the opal burning with prismatic light in his gray tie, his gloves, his solemnity, all combined to rebuke impertinent suggestion and at the same time to lend a unique and unholy zest to the spectacle.

"Looks mighty like rain this morning," one lean and leathery rancher remarked to his companion as the stranger passed.

"Sure does," declared the other with conviction.

The stranger, with another anxious glance heavenward, quickened his pace till he reached the corner, where he ventured into the street to accost the traffic policeman. He held out an envelope and asked:

"Could you direct me to this address?"

The policeman read the card, and a look of sympathetic concern stole into his face.

"Two blocks down, on the right-hand side," he said gently, and followed the stranger's retreating figure with a reflective shake of the head, as if he mused for an instant upon the mutability of human fortune.

The stranger followed the direction given and found the place he sought. He could not well have missed it, since two huge plate-glass show-windows, forming the front of a converted storeroom, proclaimed its identity in gilt letters a foot high:

PYRITES GOLD MINING AND MILLING COMPANY.

The stranger entered and approached a dapper youth seated at a desk near the door. He produced and tendered a card.

"I would like to see one of the officers," he said.

The young man took the card and read:

MR. ARCHIBALD BROTHERTON,
Attorney and Counselor at Law,
Edmonton, Massachusetts.

He continued to study the card, contracting his brows in an effort to resolve correctly a dilemma fraught with variegated possibilities. Then his eye fell on the umbrella, and his brow lightened.

"I'll see," he said, and disappeared among the maze of cubicles in the rear, formed by mahogany partitions along a central aisle.

Presently he returned, preceded by a short and very stout man of beaming countenance, whose bald and highly polished head caught intermittent reflections from various electric-light bulbs as he advanced, giving something of the effect of heliographic signaling. When he caught sight of the visitor, he changed his pace to a rush and grasped the newcomer's hands.

"Ah, Mr. Brotherton!" cried the stout man. "A most delightful and auspicious meeting! I had your letter, and had it not been for the uncertainty as to the date of your arrival, I would have called at your hotel. By the way, I had better introduce myself. I am Mr. Longyear, the president of the company."

This gale of cordiality rather staggered Mr. Brotherton, but it thawed him perceptibly. He smiled with wintry ingenuousness.

"Yes," he admitted, "there was some uncertainty about the date. Very kind of you, though, I'm sure—especially as my errand is one which may involve criticism."

"Tut, tut! Ha, ha!" laughed Mr. Longyear. "We court the fullest publicity. We *want* our stockholders to investigate us. Then we know they will support us all the more generously. Come right back to my office, and let's get down to brass tacks."

"Brass tacks it is," said Mr. Brotherton, jocosely accepting the Western parlance.

He followed the president back through the shadowy aisle to a rear cell, larger than the rest and furnished with a degree of ostentation. Mr. Longyear placed a chair of mahogany and leather for his guest, and then entrenched himself behind the big, flat-topped desk.

"Yes," he declared, "we want our stockholders to form the most familiar and intimate relations with us. In fact, I wish I could have all of them right here in the office with me every day. Then they would appreciate both our difficulties and our expectations, and any misunderstanding would be impossible."

Mr. Brotherton cleared his throat with a professional air, but not without some embarrassment.

"It is true," he said, "that my client, Miss Paisley, has been considerably disappointed in the failure of the stock to pay any dividend. She was led to believe, when she made the purchase, that the mine would begin to yield within six months. That was two years ago."

"Quite right! Quite right!" exclaimed Mr. Longyear, holding up a deprecatory hand. "Don't say another word. I know precisely how Miss Paisley feels. I know, because I shared her hopes and am a partner in her disappointment. In fact, we all felt that way two years ago. That was when the Lode Star, next to us, made its big strike, and we expected to duplicate it every day; but the Lode Star pinched out in a few months, and it became apparent to their engineers, as well as to our own, that the true ore-body lay much deeper. Naturally, many of our stockholders failed to understand, just as Miss Paisley did, and we experienced difficulty in securing the funds necessary for sinking our shaft to the required depth. These difficulties, I am happy to say, have now been overcome."

"The shaft has been sunk, then?" queried Mr. Brotherton in surprise.

"Absolutely. Down five hundred and thirty feet. We shall reach the six-hundred-foot level in about six weeks, and be ready to cross-cut."

Mr. Longyear accompanied this assurance with a smile so expansive and joyous as to disarm the cruelest cynic that ever lived. Mr. Brotherton, being far removed from that category, felt a glowing warmth about the cockles of his heart.

"I am truly pleased to find that matters have progressed so favorably," he said.

"My boy," cried Mr. Longyear, "don't take my word for it. Don't take my word for anything. There's only one satisfactory thing to do in a case like this, and that is to go out to the mine and see for yourself. No, not a word! I insist! You must visit the mine as my guest. Then there will be no more hearsay or misunderstanding. You'll not be relying on anybody. You'll *know!* Come, when shall we start?"

"I have nothing else in view," said Mr. Brotherton, thrilled a little with the prospect of adventure.

"To-morrow, then! Your hotel, the San Cristobal? Good! I'll meet you in the lobby at nine o'clock. We will take the ten thirty train for Daggett. The trip will take us about three days, but it will be worth it. The experience of a lifetime! And you can't say I am trying to sell you stock, either," added Mr. Longyear merrily, "because our stock goes off the market a week from to-morrow. Absolutely! Not another share will be sold from the company's treasury. The directors voted it at their last meeting."

Mr. Brotherton left the offices of the Pyrites Gold Mining and Milling Company with a pleasant sense of good business well concluded. Outside, the sea-fog had lifted, swept away by a brisk westerly breeze, and had revealed a sky of immaculate blue, in the center of which blazed an absurdly bright and gorgeous sun. It seemed, somehow, symbolic of his interview. So, having his confidence both in the weather and in human nature fully restored, even to the extent of being rather painfully conscious of his umbrella, Mr. Brotherton made his way back to his hotel.

II

THE desert in June does not encourage familiarity. The heat is the dry and bitter heat of a furnace. The wind engendered by the passage of the automobile scorches rather than cools. One drinks great gulps of water, which promptly appears on the skin in drops and vanishes in steam. The thick clouds of swaying dust that mark the

path of the car seem prophetic of the end of all mankind. The sun overhead is a thing to be worshiped—or anathematized—rather than described.

Mr. Brotherton, picturesquely if not tactfully arrayed in a flannel shirt, a khaki suit, leather puttees, and a broad-brimmed felt hat, and clinging lovingly to the canteen as if it were a nursing-bottle, contrived sufficient leisure for these reflections between the marvelous tales of chance and daring with which Mr. Longyear plied him.

THE POLICEMAN READ THE CARD, AND A LOOK OF SYMPATHETIC CONCERN STOLE INTO HIS FACE. "TWO BLOCKS DOWN, THE RIGHT-HAND SIDE," HE SAID GENTLY

"See that range just over yonder?"

Mr. Brotherton made out a steely blue something on the horizon that might have been a mountain. Whether it was five miles away, or fifty, he could not guess.

"Just around the shoulder of that spur is the Sally Ann Mine. Sally Ann was a real character, too. She stood off four claim-jumpers there in a cañon, with nothing but a bird-gun and two revolvers. Killed two of them, and the others got away, badly wounded. They tried her for murder in San Berdoo, and she hired a couple of Indians to swear that they saw the fracas and that she shot in self-defense. Jury acquitted her on the first ballot. She took out half a million from that mine before it was sold to an Eastern syndicate."

So ran the tales; and little by little the romance of this new world caught and clung to Mr. Brotherton. The very discomfort of the journey seemed, somehow, a confirmation of its charm. At evening they reached the range and were enmeshed in

shaded cañons, up which climbed the picturesque and winding road.

Mr. Brotherton watched the sun plump down behind a serrated ridge of rock with disappointment, for he had read much of the beauty of desert sunsets. Darkness seemed imminent. And then, beginning as a crystalline light, and deepening in stupendous bands of gold and orange, blue and rose, till the whole west was a celestial ocean of party-colored flame, came an afterglow that beggared fancy. It died out in crimson embers as they reached the bunk-house, and after it came the stars.

Divested of most of his clothing, and with his interior comfortably awash at last, Mr. Brotherton contemplated the pyrotechnic heavens with deepening awe. Almost it seemed as if he could stretch his hand up to that velvet black and pick off clusters of planets, systems, and blazing suns of space. It was Mr. Longyear's very practical snore from the bunk-house that roused him to the necessity of seeking rest.

In the morning, after breakfasting on canned goods and flapjacks without butter, he made his descent into the mine, the cage falling slowly as, by the light of a lantern, Mr. Longyear indicated levels and discoursed volubly on formations, country rock, strikes, float, intrusive granite, white dikes, spider veins, and the rest, till Mr. Brotherton's head throbbed with unassimilated knowledge.

After they had reached the bottom of the shaft, and had seen a vast quantity of meaningless stone, they were returned to the surface, and Mr. Brotherton was shown ore samples from neighboring mines in which minute particles of yellow metal were plainly discernible. He learned how to emphasize these by moistening the rock with his tongue and squinting at it wisely through a magnifying-glass. And when they started, in the late afternoon, for a more comfortable return journey to Daggett, though he knew no more than he had at Edmonton, Massachusetts, a month before, Mr. Brotherton believed a vast deal more, and believed it with that ideal faith that is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

In fact, the Easterner was fairly in the grip of the mining fever—a pathological condition which developed progressively as mine and mountain range and desert receded into the twilight of fascinating memory. It was not, however, till they were aboard the train from Daggett to Los Angeles that Mr. Longyear, expert in dealing with the disease, began what might be called a clinical examination and prognosis.

"You ought to come to California, Brotherton. You'd find a hundred opportunities here to one in the staid old East. Take this business of mining, for instance. Many a mining lawyer has died a millionaire. It's the greatest, the cleanest, the most enticing game in the world, and every new mine opened up is a direct addition to the national wealth. By the way, I don't recall whether you yourself are a stockholder in our company or not?"

"No, I am not," Mr. Brotherton confessed regretfully. "My private means are not such as to leave me much margin for investment. I realize what you say about opportunities, though."

Mr. Longyear's face fell. As the East believes in the Western gold-mine, so the West believes in the Eastern capitalist. For a moment Mr. Longyear felt a sense of indignant outrage, as of one who has been betrayed into angling in a fishless pond; but after an interval of calculating reflection, his countenance cleared.

"We positively must discontinue the sale of stock a week from to-day," he mused. "Seventy feet farther down and a little cross-cutting, say fifty to a hundred feet, will put us right into the ore. I'll stake my reputation on that. So you see it wouldn't be fair to those who are already stockholders to sell any large amount of stock at this juncture."

"No, not at all—of course not," agreed Mr. Brotherton.

"Brotherton," said Mr. Longyear impulsively, "honest to goodness, I'd like to have you in on this. It isn't often that I take a fancy to a man on short acquaintance, but nobody can say that I'm not a good friend. I'll tell you what I can do. This client of yours, now, Miss Paisley—she's tolerably well-to-do, eh?"

"Quite so. Very much so, in fact," nodded Mr. Brotherton.

"Well, I'll take it upon myself to reserve a block of fifteen thousand shares at twenty cents a share, provided Miss Paisley will notify you by wire that she will pay for, say, ten thousand, you to take the balance. That will be five thousand shares for yourself, an investment of only one thousand dollars. What do you say to that?"

Mr. Brotherton started in his seat, and

his pale cheeks flushed with animation. In his eyes was a longing fire. He experienced something of the breathless impulse of the belated traveler who is exhorted to jump from the wharf after the retreating ship, with the assurance that he can make it in two jumps. If he withdrew his savings from the Edmonton bank, and anticipated his fee for his present Western trip by a small loan, he might be able to raise the money and take the first step toward fortune.

"BOSH!" SAID OLD MAN HOOKER WITH SOPHISTICATED DISGUST. "ALL HE'S GOT'S IN HIS WIFE'S NAME"

"I really don't know—" he began with hesitation.

"Done!" cried Mr. Longyear, grasping the lawyer's hand warmly, while his smile radiated the joy of the cook who lifts the well-broiled steak from the gridiron. "It's a proud day for me, Archibald, when you become one of us! We'll send the telegrams as soon as we reach the city."

III

PROMPTLY on reaching Los Angeles, Mr. Longyear—who, though a priest of chance, left little to that divinity—wrote the telegram to Miss Paisley, which Mr. Brotherton duly signed. Two days later came Miss Paisley's reply by wire, accepting the proposal. There followed an interchange of letters, in which Mr. Brotherton expressed complete confidence in the company and assured his client that it would be paying dividends in six weeks, and in which Miss Paisley, enclosing check for two thousand dollars, expressed complete confidence in Mr. Brotherton. Furthermore, after some lively telegraphing on his own account, Mr. Brotherton received his certificate for five thousand shares.

And now Mr. Longyear no longer descanted on the opportunities afforded by the West, nor did he insist that his new-found friend should stay in Los Angeles to take advantage of them. Indeed, his attitude on the subject possessed about the warmth and enthusiasm with which a returned vacationist welcomes a bill-collector.

Nevertheless, Mr. Brotherton continued to stay. At bottom, this dalliance may have had to do with the tardy admonitions of congenital New England caution; but these were so deep down that he himself was not clearly aware of them. They merely bred in him a feeling that he ought to stand by and, by his presence, guarantee the outcome. And, in the mean time, he fed his passion for the mining game by haunting the resorts of veteran miners and prospectors and listening to their veraciously particularized wonder-tales. In this way he ran across old man Hooker.

It was an accidental mention of Mr. Longyear that developed a sudden loquacity in old man Hooker, a weather-beaten desert rat whose detached cynicism toward city folks and their ways flowed like an unfailing spring.

"Longyear? Sure, I know him. It was me sold him them pyrites claims he's workin' now. He done me up, all right, too, in that deal. He give me his note for two thousand, and I give him the deed, and I ain't never been able to collect the note since. I got it in jedgment, and I ain't never been able to collect it thataway, neither. They ain't seemingly no way I kin collect it. He's a slick one, all right!"

"But Mr. Longyear's a wealthy man," protested the dumfounded Brotherton.

"Bosh!" said old man Hooker with sophisticated disgust. "All he's got's in his wife's name. He's got a share or two in that there company of hisn, enough to qualify fer president, but that's all. And what good would a share or two in my own mine do me? 'Specially as I heard the other day as how they'd sold half a million shares a'ready. Oh, he's a slick one, all right!"

It was almost at the end of the allotted six weeks that this astonishing information fell upon Mr. Brotherton. As if this was not enough, there also came a letter from Miss Paisley chiding him all too gently for negligence in answering her letters, and announcing a projected visit to the Coast.

Thenceforward Mr. Brotherton began feverishly to haunt the offices of the mining company—where it became progressively difficult for him to see any one—hoping hourly that the ore-body might be apprehended; but the ore-body evidently had no such guileless intention. The shaft did not empale it, nor did any cross-cut ensnare it. The six weeks passed, grew to eight, to nine, and all that he could gather was the sprightly news that they must go deeper. And then Miss Paisley announced her arrival.

They had known each other all their lives. He had been her attorney ever since his admission to the bar. They were of the same age, height, build, and complexion. They had the same severely intellectual tastes, the same high ideals. Malicious persons affected to discover a marked facial resemblance between them; and in all this perfect accord there lay, for Mr. Brotherton, a sort of doom.

For years he had sensed it, hidden yet ultimate, wordless yet compelling, a thing no chance could change, no strategy elude. If he had escaped thus far, it was by fixing his bachelor existence in a groove so deep that only physical violence could dislodge him. Not, of course, that he did not esteem Miss Paisley. He esteemed her so much that he had no room left for any other emotion. He could, without difficulty, venerate her, as one might the Constitution of the United States; but he had a dreadful conviction that Miss Paisley would not be content with veneration.

One dim hope remained. If only she would be angry, furiously angry, over her mining stock! But as he entered the parlor of his hotel to greet her, he saw the futility of any such expectation. Miss Paisley was not at all angry. She was just tenderly reproachful.

"I am here, Archibald," confessed the lady.

"I see you are, Emma. I—er—I'm glad to see you," lied the abandoned man.

"I have been here over a week," continued Miss Paisley, revealing the truth in increasingly large instalments. "I have been looking into matters a little for myself."

Mr. Brotherton shuddered. It promised to be worse than he had thought. Voiceless, he hung his head.

"I have had this mine examined by two of the best mining engineers in the West," went on Miss Paisley, releasing a third instalment of disconcerting fact.

"What—what did they say?" asked Mr. Brotherton.

"They said there was no indication of ore within ten miles of the place."

There ensued a dead silence. He was too fundamentally honest to pretend surprise, and too supremely miserable to assume any

false cheer. Miss Paisley advanced and laid a clinging hand on his coat-sleeve.

"I know you were perfectly honest in recommending it, Archibald. These wicked men deceived you, that is all. Dear friend, I know you are the soul of honor. We will not let it make any difference between us, will we, dear?'

Unquestionably there was something sinister in this generosity. She was regarding him with a suffused glance that flushed the end of her nose. Mr. Brotherton straightened rebelliously and then went limp.

Had he been honest? Had he used that cool, calm, penetrating, deliberate judgment which a confiding female had a right to expect from her man of affairs? Had he paused, had he reflected, had he inquired? Or had he been just a plain, unsalted, ungarnished sucker? And if the latter, what awful atonement might lie before him?

"I'll go and see Mr. Longyear," muttered Mr. Brotherton, dimly realizing that hope of continued liberty lay in action, and that at once. "I'll demand an explanation."

Miss Paisley released his arm.

"I do not think it advisable for you to see those swindlers any more, Archibald," she said. "It is impossible to tell what they may lead you into next. I think you had better come home with me."

"Oh, I'll see them!" cried Mr. Brotherton with sudden energy. "I'll find out what this means. I'll call them to account. I'll go there right away!"

"I am convinced it is a wild-goose chase," said Miss Paisley with some asperity. And then she added, with a quick renewal of tenderness: "I should prefer to ignore it entirely, Archie. It shall never be mentioned between us."

But Mr. Brotherton was determined, perceiving therein a chance at least to escape from the room and secure a few moments in which to think.

"I'll call at your hotel this afternoon and report, Emma," he promised. "But my reputation, both as a business and a professional man, is at stake, and I must insist on a vindication."

He threw into the assertion all the dignity and pride he could muster, and under cover of it got away. He fell almost mechanically into the path to Longyear's office, so often had he traversed it in the last few weeks. He brushed by supercilious subordinates and entered the president's sanctum, where he found Longyear busy with dictation.

"Longyear," said Mr. Brotherton without preliminary, "Miss Paisley is here, and she is very much dissatisfied with her stock purchases. She goes so far as to characterize them as a swindle, and I admit that I agree with her. Now what are you going to do about it?"

Mr. Longyear regarded the intruder with an abstracted tolerance more crushing than contempt, and answered briefly:

"Nothing."

"Do you mean to force me to seek legal redress for my client?"

"If you can afford to air the transaction, we can," said Mr. Longyear pleasantly.

"I ought to stand outside your door and warn every one who enters of what you are!" cried Mr. Brotherton passionately.

"The State maintains free lodgings for nuts who try that."

"You are a scoundrel!"

"Brotherton," mused the president of the Pyrites Gold Mining and Milling Company, following his settled practise of implanting hope in ground tilled by despair, "you and your client are like all other inexperienced investors—you lack patience. Nobody can guarantee an ore discovery on a given date, but that doesn't mean that a property is worthless. Just as you came in I was beginning dictation on the biggest advertising campaign ever pulled off in Los Angeles. I'm going to sell a hundred thousand dollars' worth of stock by Christmas, and if we haven't struck ore now we will simply carry the shaft down till we do strike it—that's all!"

IV

Mr. Brotherton left the company's offices because there was nothing else to do; but he was past putting any faith in promises. As he went back to his hotel, the future looked black indeed—or rather it looked mud-colored, like Miss Paisley's hair. There was no comfort anywhere. The gruesome future was the logical outcome of the asinine past, and he had only himself to blame.

One thing must be recorded to his credit, and that is that it never occurred to him not to reimburse Miss Paisley. If he couldn't do it with money—and he couldn't—then he would do it in the manner she anticipated, to the bitter limit of all that their connubial union could do to him. In the pursuit of righteousness, Mr. Brotherton was no piker.

"I OUGHT TO STAND OUTSIDE YOUR DOOR AND WARN EVERY ONE WHO ENTERS OF WHAT YOU ARE!" CRIED MR. BROTHERTON PASSIONATELY

He was too distraught to remain in the hotel, and after circling the lobby he went out again. Perhaps it was accident, perhaps it was the workings of his subconscious mind, still forlornly busy with the idea of freedom, that sent him northward toward the haunts of the miners and prospectors who were so recently his admiration. Again it may have been either accident or the intervention of his good fairy that disclosed the back of old man Hooker's dilapidated sack coat entering a near-beer saloon. But from that on, Mr. Brotherton owed his salvation to his own ingenuity, stimulated by his sense of imminent peril and untrammeled by any prudent consideration save that of haste. He followed old man Hooker.

Half an hour later he emerged from the temple of Barmecidal imbibition with a quickened step, a heightened color, and an eye alight with the first faint dawn of hope. His certificate for five thousand shares in the Pyrites Gold Mining and Milling Company was gone, transferred to old man Hooker; but in its place in his pocket nestled a written assignment to himself of Hooker's two-thousand-dollar judgment against Longyear. Armed with this, he made for the offices of the morning newspapers.

of the first section, covering the entire page, was the most gorgeous advertisement of the company's stock that had yet been put out. It had been written by Mr. Longyear himself, it marked the beginning of his great stock-selling campaign, and it was, as he modestly admitted to himself, a "humdinger." He spent fifteen minutes conning its alluring phrases with swelling satisfaction, and then, quite casually and mechanically, turned the paper over and glanced at the fifth page.

To Mr. Longyear, Mr. Brotherton had been merely an incident, and, since the sale of the fifteen thousand shares of stock, not a particularly important incident. Disposing of the Brotherton protest on the occasion of the gentleman's last visit to the offices of the company had been a mere matter of routine. Indeed, Mr. Brotherton was quite out of Mr. Longyear's thoughts the next morning when the genial president of the mining company settled himself behind his big desk and opened the morning newspaper.

The paper held a peculiar interest for him that morning, for on the fourth page

There are moments when the numbing effect of shock operates as a merciful provision of nature. Mr. Longyear, staring uncomprehendingly at the newspaper, was at least aware that the longer comprehension could be postponed, the better off he would be. He put down the paper and stared at the wall. He put out his hand to the bell to summon aid, doubted very much whether it would be aid that he would summon, and took up the paper again.

His second inspection confirmed his first dazed fear. Awful as the thing was, it was there. Its objectivity was beyond dispute. For the first time in a long and colorful career, Mr. Longyear knew the drear sensations of the man who gets what is coming to him.

The fifth page was also devoted to a full-page advertisement. It announced in crashing type that on next Christmas morning, on the court-house steps, there would be sold to the highest bidder, at public auction, a judgment for two thousand dollars against Connington Longyear, president of the Pyrites Gold Mining and Milling Company, said judgment representing the unpaid purchase price of the mining claims now belonging to the said company. There followed a candid estimate of Mr. Longyear's financial standing and resources—so blightingly candid, in fact, that Mr. Longyear himself blushed at reading it. It mentioned that fifty shares of stock in the mining company was his only known asset, and added that, for reasons set forth at length, even that was probably worthless. The advertisement was signed by Archibald Brotherton, judgment creditor.

Before Mr. Longyear had finished the page, a chorus of feet along the passageway outside his door warned him of what was coming. He attempted to shove the paper out of sight, realized the folly of that, and turned to face his associates. In they came—Mr. Bunker, vice-president; Mr. Tiddleton, secretary; Mr. Bump, treasurer; and Mr. Mouther, attorney. They lined up before him.

"What the ——" inquired Mr. Bunker, embroidering the query with such verbal witcheries as vivid emotion and a rococo fancy could suggest.

"What the ——" echoed each in turn.

"Fifteen thousand dollars' worth of advertising contracts gone to pot!" groaned Mr. Tiddleton.

"He'll probably keep it up till Christmas if you don't shut him off," prophesied Mr. Bump.

"The news that two thousand dollars' worth of claims has been capitalized for two millions may interest the postal authorities," dryly opined Mr. Mouther.

"Can't you get an injunction?" weakly inquired Mr. Longyear.

"Fat chance!" sneered the jurist. "I can't enjoin a man from advertising a sale of his own property, and if I did I'd only cop off an extra chunk of blighting publicity for us."

"There's just one thing for it, Longyear," said Mr. Bunker, with the manner of the jury foreman who hands in a verdict of guilty in the first degree. "You've got to pay that judgment!"

V

Mr. Brotherton's reception at the office of the Pyrites Gold Mining and Milling Company, when he answered the summons of Mr. Longyear that afternoon, was one of glacial glumness but of profound respect. There was nothing to argue about, so Mr. Longyear did not argue.

"Will you take a check?" he asked sourly.

"I will if it's certified by the paying teller of a good bank," said Mr. Brotherton, who was learning fast.

That same afternoon he turned the check over to Miss Paisley. She took it reluctantly, and surveyed it with manifest disappointment.

"But you'll come back with me to Edmonton, won't you, Archibald?" she asked. "There's nothing to keep you out here now, is there?"

The sagacious Mr. Brotherton smilingly shook his head.

"I think I'll stay a while in the West," he said. "And maybe I'll locate here. I really think I'm getting on to the ropes!"

ASPIRATION

The skylark mounts with fearless wing,
And, like a shaft of fire,
Goes flaming down the sunset seas
To islands of desire.

So mount, my soul, with fearless wing
And gleam afar—
A radiant adventurer
Seeking some distant star!

Harold Vinal

A New Breed of Sailors

THE URGENT CALL FOR OFFICERS AND CREWS TO MAN OUR GREAT NEW MERCHANT MARINE, AND THE OPPORTUNITY IT OFFERS TO RED-BLOODED YOUNG AMERICANS

By Thomas F. Barry, Jr.

HEAVING away on the forebraces of old wind-jammers, and on the lines of brand-new steam vessels, young American sailors are singing the ancient chanteys of the sea. With their backs bent over wooden capstan-bars they step out in time with the chantey-man's jingle. Standing out from port on a long trip, or homeward bound, their voices are raised in a lilting measure, and every heave and every pull draws America nearer to the goal of a great merchant marine. Hear them roll out the quaint old lines:

A capital ship for an ocean trip was the Walloping Windowblind.
No storm that blew dismayed the crew or troubled the captain's mind;
And the man at the wheel was made to feel contempt for the wildest blow,
Though it often appeared, when the gale had cleared, he was down in his bunk below!
Now, the captain sat on the commodore's hat and dined in a royal way
On toasted pigs and pickles and figs and gunnery bread each day;
But the cook was Dutch, and behaved as such, for all he fed the crew
Was a number of tons of hot-cross buns, served up with sugar and glue.
Yo-heave-oh, for old Rio, where the southern trade-winds blow!
For there's plenty of gold, so I've been told, on the banks of the Rio Grande.

After years of maritime inactivity the red-blooded youth of America is again "going down to the sea in ships." The young men of our country are leaving their homes astern to shove off for the steaming current of the Gulf Stream or the scented trade-winds of the tropics. We are again fast becoming a nation of sailors, reminiscent of the days when Yankee clipper ships dotted the seven seas and won the respect of the world for their dash and daring.

Captain Irving L. Evans, national director of the Sea Service Bureau of the United States Shipping Board, is authority for the statement that America's young manhood has decided that the mariner's profession—for it is a profession—can no longer be monopolized by foreign seamen. No matter how friendly we may be with other nations, the motto of the Shipping Board is "American seamen first!"

Years ago, during the reign of "bucko mates" wielding marlinespike and belaying-pin with deadly accuracy, there was no incentive for the young American to abandon his comfortable parental fireside for the uncertainties and hardships making up the career of a seafarer. Broken heads were too numerous in the forecastle. The log-books of sailing vessels all too frequently bore such entries as these:

John Jones, able seaman, in latitude so many degrees north, longitude so many degrees west, fell from the main royal-yard to the deck amidships, and was instantly killed.

Jan Larsen, deck-boy, on this day at ten o'clock, local time at ship, became insane and jumped over the side, drowning before the vessel could be hove to or a small boat launched.

The maker of these entries neglected to say that the royal lifts, or other running-gear, were let go when John Jones was hanging for dear life on the yard jackstay, while he balanced himself on the yard foot-rope in the teeth of a howling northeaster. If traced back, it might have been found that just previous to going aloft, Jones had a "misunderstanding with the second mate," during which the officer received a black eye, John shaking no mean fist.

In the case of Jan Larsen, who, other than the ship's officers, saw the insane sailor jump overboard? No one! The mates reported it, the captain signed his name under the notation in the log-book

at the end of the twenty-four-hour watch, and the sailors didn't see it.

If, on reaching port, soft words to the officials failed to lull their curiosity as to the death of either man, and an inquiry was begun, could not the ship's officers place in evidence lengthy affidavits testifying to their own good reputations and to the kindness with which they treated the men under them? Would not the ship-owners take the stand and swear that during the ten years that Hell-Fire Pedersen or Dynamite Mickey O'Brien had sailed their ships, they, the owners, had never heard them say an improper word or known them to be guilty of any breach of social etiquette, let alone daring to strike a man? They could and would in both instances. The protests and complaints of foreign sailormen were as nothing to these glib owners and their brutal officers.

If a trip was made intolerable for a crew, and the men cleared out when the ship reached a port of call, whom did that benefit? Another crew could readily be secured, and the same performance would be repeated. The captain could pocket the blood-money he made in this way, or he could turn it in to his owners, to be praised and rewarded for operating his ship at such small expense.

A NEW ERA BEFORE THE MAST

The old order changeth, and to-day we find that new conditions restrain the activities of tyrannical mates and masters, that new laws and customs govern the seaman's scale of wages, his comfort and recreation, and, last but not least, the conditions of sanitation aboard ship. Gone is the filthy "glory-hole" with its vermin and pestilence. Gone is the condemned "salt-horse" and worm-eaten pilot-bread. In place of these horrors the sailor now finds comfortable quarters, good food, and good wages.

That the American sailor's life aboard ship must now be a happy one is shown by the figures compiled by Captain Evans for the last fiscal year. It appears that in the twelve months from July 1, 1918, to the same date in 1919, no fewer than 82,072 men were placed on ships in the waters of the United States by the Sea Service Bureau of the Shipping Board, without cost either to the ship-owners or to the men. Of this number—which is larger than the total number of sailors in our merchant marine before the war—almost seventy per cent were American citizens.

All these men came from the highways and byways of the land to the water-fronts, drawn there by the lure and romance of the sea, the promise of good living conditions, a chance to see the world, and liberal wages to boot. Moreover, during the same twelve months, twenty-eight thousand men below the grade of officers were recruited from their shore pursuits by the Recruiting Service of the Shipping Board, trained at the board's camps, and sent to sea.

To proceed further with Captain Evans's figures, they show that since January 1, 1917, ten thousand men have been recruited and trained for duty as officers in our new merchant marine. Ninety-five per cent of these are now serving on vessels flying the American flag, having completed their training and obtained their licenses.

The following table, supplied by Captain Evans, will serve to throw some light on the activities of the bureau in placing licensed officers during the fiscal year:

Position	Number
Masters	770
First Officers	1,406
Second Officers	1,627
Third Officers	1,747
Chief Engineers	1,376
First Assistant Engineers	1,477
Second Assistant Engineers	1,463
Third Assistant Engineers	1,655

That the United States should possess a great merchant marine is surely a logical part of our destiny. Are we not the foremost and wealthiest industrial nation in the world? And is it not fitting, therefore, that we should blaze the after-the-war commercial trail and show our skirling log-line to the mariners of other nations? It is, and Captain Evans says that we shall undoubtedly do so if our young men continue to gaze seaward with longing eyes and learn to bring the lower limb of the sun down to the horizon with a sextant.

The United States has yet to complete a huge ship-building program. Thousands of vessels used in the war as naval auxiliaries must be returned to private ownership, and who is to man these ships for commercial service? Here are young America's opportunity and duty.

This is why the Shipping Board is maintaining its training-camp at Fort Stewart, near Newport News, to which place the camp was removed in September last from

its former quarters in Boston. For at least two years to come the board will continue its organized efforts, in order to give American capital time to get into a position where it can take over the manifold operations and activities of the official body.

WORK OF THE SEA SERVICE BUREAU

To supply ships with men the Sea Service Bureau maintains agencies in Boston, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Norfolk, Savannah, Jacksonville, Tampa, New Orleans, San Francisco, Portland (Oregon), and Seattle. These agencies have done much to inaugurate a new era for sailormen. They mean that instead of having to go to shipping "crimps," and pay for the chance of a ship to sail on, American sailors get their jobs free, and with no strings attached to them.

They mean that if the individual sailor has a complaint to make concerning his ship or its officers, he can readily have it adjusted through the efforts of the bureau.

They mean that instead of being obliged to wait for a ship in some sailors' boarding-house reminiscent of the Barbary Coast, and having the boarding-master lodge a claim amounting to two or three months' wages with the captain of the vessel on which he eventually sails, Jack can go to a place of his own choosing, and many days will not elapse before he goes to sea again in a berth found for him by the bureau.

They mean that when he is placed aboard ship, the able seaman knows that his wages will be in the neighborhood of eighty-five dollars a month, with sixty cents an hour for overtime, and an allowance of a dollar and fifty cents per day for meals. He knows that his bed goes with this wage, and that he can bring his own clean bedding to the ship with him.

The officers' pay varies according to the size of the ship. When a master is placed in command of a twin-screw steamer of fifteen thousand tons or more, he receives a monthly salary of $412.50, with a daily allowance of $3.50 for meals. On vessels of thirty-five hundred tons or less, under the Shipping Board's wage-table, effective July 28, 1919, the following is the monthly scale for officers and petty officers:

Rank	Wage Per Month	Meal Allowance Per Day
Master	$330.00	$3.50
First Officer	216.25	3.00
Second Officer	$187.50	$3.00
Third Officer	163.75	3.00
Carpenter	100.00	1.50
Boatswain	95.00	1.50
Chief Engineer	305.00	3.50
First Assistant	216.25	3.00
Second Assistant	187.50	3.00
Third Assistant	163.75	3.00
Deck Engineer	100.00	1.50
Pump-man	100.00	1.50

Shades of Neptune, what affluence! In olden days, in the much-talked-of days of "iron men and wooden ships," if you had told some old salt that in the year 1919 an ordinary seaman would get a wage of sixty-five dollars a month, or a deck apprentice forty dollars a month, he would have had "Sails" make you a canvas shroud, slain you on the spot, and thrown you to the waters with lead at your feet.

The writer can remember how, many a time and oft, he was roused at night from his watch below to go aloft and take in or shift the main gaff topsail. He would have to straddle the crosstrees far above the deck, as the ship heeled and pitched in the grip of the hissing, swirling storm, and to fight the topsail's lashing chain-sheet in a hell of blackness, as if it were a live thing—all for what? Twenty shillings—five dollars—a month! Later, his pay rose to as much as thirty dollars a month; and some ten years ago he received the munificent sum of seventy-five dollars a month, sailing as second mate on a deep-water tramp, and thought that his was indeed a fortunate lot.

Thank Heaven, the conditions that existed at sea in those days do not exist now. Sailorizing has become a profession, and no "bucko mate" can stretch you senseless on the deck without risking his personal liberty.

If your heart is with our fine new merchant marine, you can hear the lilt and swing of the chanteys sung by the stalwart young American sailormen:

While cruising in Bombay on a bit of a spree—
With a yo, ho, blow the men down!
I met a fair packet, the wind blowing free—
Oh, give me the time to blow the men down!
I sent out a hawser and gave her a tow—
With a yo, ho, blow the men down!
And yard-arm to yard-arm away we did go—
Oh, give me the time to blow the men down!
Oh, blow the men down, bullies, blow the men down—
With a yo, ho, blow the men down!
Blow them right down from the trucks to the crown—
Oh, give me the time to blow the men down!

Home Cooking

BY ROBERT SHANNON

Illustrated by Anton Otto Fischer

THE low brow of Kid Conley darkened with a stubborn scowl.

"For the last time, I tell you, I'm goin' to beat it up to Kansas City," he repeated with stupid persistence.

The hard blue eye of his companion measured the Kid up and down contemptuously.

"And have the coppers nail you the minute you step in the station!" Bert Brennan, thin-lipped, lean, and dapper, smiled with evil amusement. "You'd be a lot more successful, Kid, if you'd keep out of jail; but if you're pinin' for free bed and board, go ahead!"

Brennan turned away from his fellow crook, bought a paper, and opened it to the classified advertisements. He folded it in half and glanced over the page rapidly.

Like a bull-pup following a terrier, the Kid came after him, plowing through the crowd in the Memphis station.

"You ain't ditchin' me, are you, Bert?" he asked. "You ain't sore about me wantin' to go back to Kansas City?"

"If you want to be bull-headed," replied Brennan, without lifting his eyes from the newspaper, "it's your own lookout. I'm goin' to hide away for a few weeks, till it blows over. They know you in K. C., and they know me. There'll be a squawk to the cops inside of an hour, and when it comes I'll be on a train somewheres where they won't find me—that's all."

Left to his own limited resources, Kid Conley began to weaken.

"Where you figure on goin', Bert?" he inquired.

Brennan marked a spot on the paper with a slender, well-manicured finger, and thrust it under the nose of his partner. The Kid read:

> Board for several gentlemen. Genteel surroundings. Home cooking. MRS. JOHN KENDALL CHRISTIE, Bayport, La.

"Home cookin'," said Brennan. "Three weeks of heavy feedin' away down in the sticks; a little flier in the famous Dixie hospitality. Better play safe and come along, Kid."

As Kid Conley slowly read the modest advertisement, a gentleman in St. Louis—a gentleman of entirely different style and stripe—was, at the exact minute, reading it also. Luck is the power of the press.

The remarkable coincidence came about in this way. The newsdealer in Memphis had inadvertently sold Brennan a paper that was twenty-four hours old. When the issue had been fresh from the press, a commercial traveler had bought a copy, had carried it with him to St. Louis, and had cast it into the vacant chair in the lobby of the Planters' Hotel just before taking the elevator up to his room.

Having finished his meal in the spacious room, Bernardo the Great appeared in the lobby, lit a cigar, and dropped into the soft leather of a huge chair. The paper beside him caught his eye and he picked it up casually. Subconsciously, perhaps, his mind was seeking a diversion from the gloomy luxury of the Planters'.

Despite his senatorial appearance, Bernardo did not appear at home in the famous hostelry. He was more thoroughly at ease in the small-town hotel, in the smoking-car of the branch-line railroad, but most of all on the opera-house stage in some back-country village.

It was there, facing his audience of gullibles, that Bernardo the Great rose to his grand heights, plying the mystic arts of hypnotism, mesmerism, and legerdemain. The simple twist of the wrist, the deft pass of the hand before the eye, the card up the sleeve, and the ancient and magic word "presto" on the tip of the tongue—that was Bernardo in his native element.

How came it, then, that the charlatan

was discovered in the Planters'? Fate—who shall say? Two successive months of unprecedented profit on the road found him with an unprecedented thickness of bank-notes in his wallet. It was enough. While the roll lasted, the show season was over. So, St. Louis, a fling at prosperity, a new tailored suit of broadcloth with a long-tailed coat, six gleaming white waistcoats, a wide-brimmed hat of the best Southern quality, a profusion of hotel silver and linen. Then presently Bernardo again became restless.

He glanced idly through the Memphis daily, scanning the pages with half attention, until he chanced to come across the announcement of Mrs. John Kendall Christie's—the same that simultaneously was engaging the wavering attention of Kid Conley.

"I need a rest," he told himself, "and therefore I shall take myself to leisurely Bayport, Louisiana."

To those of us whose custom is to move and act according to plan and reason, and with that systematic regularity which we are pleased to call normality, certain characteristics in the man Bernardo must ever remain more or less mysterious.

"THAT ONE LITTLE JUG IS WORTH MORE MONEY THAN YOU EVER GOT YOUR MITTS ON AT ONE TIME IN YOUR WHOLE LIFE"

At the desk the frigid clerk gave whole attention.

"To-morrow I should like to sail on a Lee line steamer for Memphis," Bernardo said. "Will you make the arrangements, please?"

The hypnotist was not asking a courtesy; he was announcing an intention.

II

THERE had been days when Peach-Tree Road, which led out from Bayport to the old Christie mansion, had seen fine guests in fine carriages rolling toward the galleried and pillared plantation home.

Over the same road spirited horses had

drawn Andrew Jackson, the Marquis de Lafayette, the semigentleman pirate, Jean Lafitte, and, in another generation, Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. But that had been in the magnificent days when there really had been a Christie plantation and Christie men — proud, virile Southerners who must now be turning in their graves with aristocratic shame at the poverty and humiliation that had fallen upon their house.

In an ancient depot hack that creaked and swayed, Kid Conley and Bert Brennan, scum of scum from the underworld, progressed along the highway of distinguished associations until they were deposited, grips in hands, before the venerable homestead.

It was Brennan's soft hand that raised the quaint old knocker, and it was his glib tongue that did the talking. The Kid wasn't that kind. His simple gifts ran in another direction. A deadening clout on the jaw was his idea of finesse.

When Brennan removed his hat and bowed, as Miss Lucy Christie answered the door, the Kid, too, pulled his hat from his bullet-head and attempted to emulate his pal's actions, with a hazy idea that it was part of the game.

"Might we be fortunate enough to find accommodations here?" Brennan asked with his most ingratiating air.

For a moment there was a puzzled expression on the face of the young girl, and then a smile flashed.

"Oh, you're boa'ders, aren't you?" she asked in a soft-accented voice that rose gently in surprise.

Brennan looked straight into her eyes and smiled.

"We hope to be," he said.

"Why, of course," she said, a trifle confused. "You see, you're the first ones who've come, and really we scarcely expected that any one would come."

She bade them enter the old-fashioned parlor.

"If you'll wait, grandmother will come and talk to you," she told them. "Just sit down and be comfortable."

When she had left the room, the keen eyes of Brennan darted about, swiftly appraising everything in sight. A glance showed him that he was in a patrician home.

"Pipe the French clock on the mantel," he said in an undertone. "There was one like that marked four hundred dollars in a store on Fifty-Fourth Street in the big town. This joint looks like the real thing to me."

Kid Conley assented with a jerk of his head.

"Swell-lookin' kid," he remarked. "Lots of fire in them black eyes. Did you get the back curls, eh?"

Brennan had risen and gone over to a delicate mahogany table, and had picked up an exquisitely wrought gold pen that lay beside a curiously figured ink-pot of the same precious metal. He fingered both articles reverently before he sat down again.

"Oh, baby!" he breathed. "I know where there's a bird that deals in that stuff. There's scarcely any limit to what he strings these rich guys for it. Oh, baby!"

It was too much to expect that Kid Conley could grasp more than one idea at a time.

"Don't look a day over eighteen," he asserted. "Weight about a hundred and ten, ringside."

"How's that?" Brennan asked.

"And she's got a color like—like a peach," the Kid added, straining his imagination.

"Are you talking about that girl?"

"Sure—a swell-looking little jane!"

Brennan leaned forward in his chair and tapped his friend on the knee impressively.

"Lay off that right now," he said, with the light of a great inspiration in his eye. "You ain't no ladies' man, and besides, you don't speak her language. We stumbled into something soft here, and don't you gum it up by getting fresh. You keep your mouth shut—I do the talking, see?"

The characteristic scowl began to cloud the Kid's face.

"Can't a guy think what he pleases?" he demanded.

Brennan lowered his voice to a sinister whisper.

"I'm going to do all the thinking and all the talking on this job. We came here for a rest, and we fell into a regular gold-mine. If my hunch is right, there's enough junk in this dump to make you and me rich. Lay low and leave it to me. Let me lay this thing out."

Despite the high respect he had for Brennan's judgment in such matters, the Kid was disposed to quibble.

"I don't see nothin' much," he protested. "Looks to me like it would be a waste of time to try to cop any of this stuff. I don't see no diamonds layin' around."

Brennan cast a cautious glance toward the door.

"People like these don't have 'em," he explained patiently. "These people got antiques."

"They got what?" queried the Kid, mystified.

Brennan directed the barbarian's attention toward a slender, graceful gold vase, inlaid with enamel, not more than six inches high, which stood on the top of an ebony *secrétaire* of colonial design.

"See that little jug? If it's the real thing —and I'll bet my right eye it is—that one little jug is worth more money than you ever got your mitts on at one time in your whole life—"

There was a rustle outside the door.

"When she comes in, stand up," Brennan warned quickly out of the corner of his mouth.

There stood before them a slender little woman, white-haired but erect. Brennan bowed, and the Kid followed him. Mrs. John Kendall Christie bowed.

"Gentlemen, my granddaughter tells me you would partake of our hospitality?"

There was a modulation in her voice and an ineffaceable mark of breeding in her manner that bespoke generations of gentlefolk. It was not lost entirely on Brennan, at least.

"Madam, it would be a pleasure indeed," he said. "May I introduce myself? I am Albert J. Brennan, of Omaha, Nebraska, and my friend here is Mr. Delbert H. Conley of the same city."

And because Mrs. John Kendall Christie was the real thing, she did not play the *grande dame*. Time, perhaps, had taken away something of her keenness of mind, had left her a bit more talkative than she would have been twenty years before, but it had not left her with any austerity.

"Sit down, gentlemen, and we'll talk it over," she said pleasantly, seating herself. "You are the first boarders that ever came to the house of a Christie, but we might as well face the facts. The family's about played out. Lucy and I are the only ones left—and we haven't any money, so we decided to take in boarders."

Brennan tried to look compassionate.

"Of course, it must be hard for you—" he began.

"Don't pity us, please!" Mrs. Christie said, with a wisp of a smile. "We have our own problem, and we're facing it. Red Cross work right here in our own community has taught us a lot of things. We've grown to understand life a little better; not but that we hold our heads just as high as ever."

"I understand," Brennan murmured.

"And I repeat it—don't pity us. Taking in boarders is perfectly honorable—perfectly, when one must. We've figured that we can make a reasonable profit at twenty dollars a week. You'll have a good bed and home cooking. You'll have the run of the house, just as if you were old-time guests, and we'll try to make you comfortable."

Brennan's tricky brain was working rapidly. With all the cunning of his kind, he quickly grasped the old lady's character. He saw that she was living in an age of vanished associations, and he shrewdly judged that he could win her confidence if he played a genteel part.

"This is better fortune than we hoped for," he said with a telepathic glance at the Kid. "Mr. Conley"—by way of explanation—"will appreciate the quiet surroundings, I'm sure. He's been one of the big brains on production work during the war, and it must be confessed that he's just about worn himself out." He smiled patronizingly, and raised one white hand as if to check a protest from the Kid. "Don't deny it, Conley. You've worked day and night, and I'm going to see to it that you keep absolutely quiet and rest. He's a thinking man, Mrs. Christie—one of those ninety-horse-power minds that are going all the time."

Mrs. Christie looked with interest on the mental marvel who at the moment had a singularly blank expression.

"And you, sir, I presume, were in it, too?" she asked Brennan, with the flash of a fine light in her eyes.

"Naval intelligence," he told her unhesitatingly. "In and out of the Kiel Canal—but even yet we aren't permitted to tell the whole story. You see, Mrs. Christie, we naval men—in my branch—we don't speak of it often."

"Many of the Christie men have been seafarers," Mrs. Christie said proudly. "Particularly the Virginia Christies—"

"I, too, am from a family of sailors," Brennan said quickly, anxious to follow up. "Perhaps this would interest you." He leaned forward and lifted his thin watch-chain with the tips of his fingers. "It was worn by Lord Nelson at the battle of Tra-

falgar. It's a family heirloom—fallen to me—the eldest child—"

"Oh—Lord Nelson!" the hostess gasped in awe.

"You mean Battlin' Nelson, don't you, Bert?" the Kid cut in, anxious to cover a seeming blunder.

Be it said for Bert Brennan that he was ever swift in pinches.

"Yes, I believe some of the contemporary historians did refer to him familiarly as Battling Nelson."

There was murder in the secret glance he shot at the Kid. Silently he determined that he would get an iron-clad pledge from Conley to keep in character as the silent thinker.

"If you are interested in antiques—" Mrs. Christie said tentatively.

"I adore them," interjected Brennan fervently.

"Then you have a treat in store. The house is literally a museum of them. The inlaid vase on the *secrétaire* is said to be a genuine Cellini. That gold pen belonged to Rochambeau. I must show you a dear snuff-box that was Lafayette's. He gave it to grandfather. And there is a curious set of six goblets of beaten gold in the dining-room—Florentine work."

Brennan could not conceal his enthusiasm.

"Wonderful!" he exclaimed. "Oh, this is wonderful!"

"For more than a hundred years the Christies have been collectors," continued Mrs. Christie, the pride of possession strong upon her. "When Uncle John Christie was in Italy in 1856, he picked up a most quaint piece—the hilt of a sword said to have been given to the Vice-Regent of Naples by Francis I. It's solid gold, and weighs nearly a pound."

Kid Conley, who was beginning to be impressed and interested, ventured a query:

"How come you don't sell this here stuff?"

An expression of pain on the aged face sent Brennan rushing again into the gap.

"Dear Conley!" he exclaimed reproachfully. "Your war-time efficiency makes you forget. Sell it!" He turned to Mrs. Christie. "It would be sacrilege to part with a single piece."

There was a wistful smile on Mrs. Christie's face; her chin quivered slightly.

"I suppose it would be bad form," she said softly. "They're all gone now, except Lucy and me, and they all loved the things so much. I suppose I'd rather starve than dispose of a single trinket, but for Lucy's sake—"

She paused, and Brennan resolved that if the Kid opened his mouth he'd murder him then and there.

"And now, if you gentlemen will follow me," she said, controlling the quaver in her voice with an effort, and rising, "I'll show you your rooms."

III

THEY followed her up the broad old staircase and into the sunny, high-ceilinged bedroom. There was a canopied four-poster, a rosewood high-boy, a huge mirror of carved and gilded wood—furnishings so rich and rare that they would have proved the sensation of any Fifth Avenue shop.

"I trust you'll be comfortable here, gentlemen," Mrs. Christie said, halting at the door. "The only person outside of a member of the family that I can recall occupying this room was General Robert E. Lee, commander-in-chief of the Confederate armies. Dinner, gentlemen, is at seven o'clock."

After she had gone, Bert Brennan threw himself luxuriously across the soft bed.

"Oh, baby! Oh, baby!" he cried gleefully, deep joy in his soul. "We're just going to skim the cream right out of this place. All we want is just one trunk packed with these souvenirs, Kid, and we'll take a jaunt over to Paris. We'll blow down to the village in the morning and have a new trunk sent out, and we'll get you some clothes—"

Kid Conley scowled.

"Look here, sucker!" he protested. "I got clothes."

"No, you ain't; you're as naked as a goldfish. You can't wear them spotted polka-dot shirts and red neckties you bought to wear at the Louisville track around this joint. I'm goin' to make a gentleman out of you for once in your life."

"What's the idea?"

"Kid, you're goin' to be quiet and subdued around here. You're goin' to wear white shirts and black ties. Yes, and I think I'll doll you up in white flannel pants. Lemme look at your face."

"What's the matter with my face?"

"Yep, just to make it good, I'm goin' to buy you a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles for dignity!"

The Kid sank heavily into an armchair

that had once borne the weight of the military genius of the South. He eyed his energetic monitor with honest admiration.

"Say, Bert," he asked, "how do you get that way? Where did you ever get hep to all this language you are throwin' at the old dame?"

"The warden lent me books—that's how. The next time you get into stir, grab yourself off an education. It 'll come in handy. This job is a cinch, Kiddy, if you don't glue everything all up."

"What's the dope for me?"

"Well, it's a tough part, but you only need to play it for about three days. Keep your mouth shut, keep your spoon out of your coffee-cup, and use your table-knife to cut with—only. If you get stuck, look to me, and I'll give you the office."

"I'm game."

"Sure you are—you're a deep thinker and a gentleman. When you don't know what to do, shut your mouth and simply get lost in thought. Get me?"

"I got you."

"Oh, baby!" Brennan caressed a pillow. "Real linen, Kid—oh, baby!"

IV

The sun shone brightly on the veranda where Kid Conley sat the following afternoon, with a heavy volume from the Christie library in his hands. For two hours he had not stirred in his chair or lifted his bespectacled eyes from the "Complete Works of William Shakespeare."

"A great student, a tireless reader of the classics," Brennan confided to Mrs. Christie, who, with her daughter, came around the corner of the house with him after an inspection of the flower-garden. "I've seen him sit that way for hours, immersed in the beauty of a fine piece of literature. It's his way of reading."

Miss Lucy Christie smiled as she gazed at the thick-set figure.

"But he seems to be asleep," she said.

Undeniably, Kid Conley was not fulfilling the part of a student that Brennan had assigned to him for the afternoon; a rule designed to keep him silent and impressive. His head drooped and his mouth was open.

"Ah, yes—he seems to be asleep, but in reality he is pondering over 'Hamlet,' perhaps. It is his habit to close his eyes and repeat the immortal lines over and over in his mind."

"Do you think he is doing that now?"

"I know it."

"How?"

"Well, I just know it—mind-reading, telepathy, I guess," Brennan remarked carelessly.

A sudden flash of interest showed on the girl's face.

"Are you interested in telepathy?" she asked as she sat down on the rustic swing suspended by chains from the veranda ceiling.

"Somewhat"—vaguely but agreeably.

"Grandmother is. It's a hobby of hers."

"Ah, yes; a wonderful thing," Brennan stalled.

"She believes in fortunes, too—isn't it awful? She went to a medium in Baton Rouge once, and she learned a lot of things, really. Do you believe in anything like that, Mr. Brennan?"

It was a question put with childlike eagerness. Quick to seize an idiosyncrasy of a prospective victim, it flashed through the mind of the crook that he might be able to utilize the grandmother's strain of mysticism.

"I can't say that I do believe; yet I can't deny that many strange things do happen."

"That's what grandmother says," Lucy affirmed. "She says you can't explain things that happen—telepathy and such."

It was a slender clue, yet for the rest of the afternoon Brennan pondered upon it, twisting it about in his mind and hoping that somehow it would give him a line to follow out. So far, he had not decided upon a plan of getting away with the trunk-load of valuables.

Out in the orchard he dropped on his back under a pear-tree and lay for two hours gazing at the lazy, pewter-colored clouds. Mrs. Christie saw him from a window and thought that the poor man was sleeping in the cool shade.

At the end of that time he rose, brushed the leaves from his clothes, rescued Kid Conley from Shakespeare, and took him strolling down Peach-Tree Road.

"Got it all doped out," he announced with enthusiasm. "Now follow me close. The old lady, I've found out, is a bug on spirit business and mind-reading stuff. Got that straight, Kid?"

The Kid nodded.

"I got you."

"Fine! Well, the two of us, you and me, we're going to pull the old razz on her, see? We're goin' to frame a mind-reading

stunt that 'll knock her cold. We're goin' to work this up great with trimmings—understand me?"

But the Kid, with little taste for intrigue, was not enthusiastic.

"You're always framin' somethin' complicated," he demurred pettishly. "Wouldn't it be quicker to let me tap 'em both on the bean—just a little tap, Bert—and cart the junk off in a wagon?"

"It would not," Brennan snapped. "You'd be pinched before you got out of town. Now listen—my layout is sure-fire. It's the old mind-reading watch trick. They sit in the parlor and turn the lights all out. All the time I'm out in another part of the house, and of course I'm not supposed to know what they do.

"Then the old lady, for instance, hides something—a silver dollar, say—some place in the room. Here's where you come in. You go look at it, see; put your hand on it, to make sure exactly where it is hidden. That's fair enough, and they won't kick. Then you tell 'em you're going to concentrate your mind on the place—see? They call me into the room and nobody says a word—not even a cheep. I read your mind, go straight to the place they hid the dollar, and pick it up."

Then in the look that Kid Conley gave his partner there was a mixture of surprise and concern.

"You're gettin' nutty, Bert," he said, grieved. "You know you can't read my mind."

"Certainly I can't."

"A NEW GUEST," SHE ANNOUNCED. "MR. WILLIAM TICKHAM BOWERS, OF CHICAGO"

"Then how in—"

"That's the trick. When you put your hand on the article, to make sure where they hid it, you slip your watch right down next to it in the dark, see? When I come in the room they all keep still. I nose around till I hear where the watch is tick-

ing—and that's where I find the article. I pick up the watch in the dark, and they never see it. We work it both ways. You leave the room next time, and I plant the watch—and you come in and do the finding."

So simple was the scheme that it was understood immediately by the Kid.

"It's a great little gag," he agreed; "but what's the good of it?"

Brennan smiled cleverly.

"We work it two or three nights and get 'em used to sitting in the dark. All the time we're getting the lay of the house and where everything is located. Oh, they'll fall for this! The old lady's a bug on the subject, and the girl's nothing but a kid. We'll have 'em believing anything we tell 'em—leave it to me, old-timer."

"It sounds all right so far," the Kid said somewhat dubiously.

"We pull the blow-off on about the third night," Brennan went on. "There's a ten-o'clock train out of Bayport. We call a hack and have it here waiting for us by nine thirty. Then we tell the two dames to sit in a dark room with the curtains down—don't worry, they'll do it. We're going to show 'em something special, see? It's to be a mind-reading message through space. I got it all figured out. After concentrating two hours the minds get into tune—their two minds. We're supposed to be down in town while this concentrating is going on. Then, when we get the vibrations all proper, we can send messages back and forth through the air, just like we was talking over the telephone."

The Kid was following him, though somewhat lamely.

"You mean that's what you're goin' to tell those two janes?"

"Sure! We plant 'em both in a little garret room—in the dark. Then we take off our shoes so we won't make any noise, carry the trunk down-stairs, and stake the joint to a vacuum cleaning. We won't leave anything, because we know by this time what to cop and where it is. All right! The trunk goes in the cab and we go in after it—hop the ten-o'clock rattler—off at the first stop—get tickets, and check the trunk on the first train in the opposite direction. They'll never trace us in a thousand years. Meanwhile—those two women sit up there in the dark wondering why the message don't come into their minds. You and me, Kid—"

The Kid's pudgy hand shot out and grasped Brennan's.

"I want to shake hands wit' a great man, pal," he cried, carried away. "You got the greatest nut I ever seen!"

Brennan graciously acknowledged the tribute.

"Always classy—nothing rough about yours truly. Always clever, Kid—always clever!"

V

After two evenings of thought transference, Mrs. Christie and Lucy were completely convinced that their guests possessed powers more wonderful than they had ever before encountered. Brennan's best hopes were realized, and even the Kid admitted that possibly the gentlemanly methods of burglary were preferable to his own primitive school of thievery.

As the two sat alone at breakfast with Irish-linen napkins in their laps, silver with the Dublin hall-mark in their hands, and old English china on the table before them, their joy at impending success was tinged with a bit of sorrow at the thought of leaving.

Such cookery! Crisp waffles swam in golden sirup before them. They had just finished a melon apiece. Fresh eggs and fragrant ham, moistened with thin, brown liquor, tempted them from a blue-rimmed platter. Lucy, daintily clad in white, came in from the kitchen with a plate of buttered toast, hot and brown, and deposited it between the two. Like many of the girls of the new South, she had learned the art of cookery, along with music and the like.

"I'm hating to leave here," Brennan told the Kid as he watched the slender miss disappear back into the kitchen.

Conley, with his mouth full, nodded.

"Pretty fair chuck," he replied, peppering his eggs from a silver piece of 1773.

"Pretty fair chuck!" Brennan snorted as he poured himself another cup of coffee from a tall, vase-shaped coffee-pot of chased silver. "Pretty fair chuck!" he repeated as he watched the dark liquid pour from the gracefully curved spout. "Kid, this living is a little bit rich for your blood. I'm worried about you. Last night you licked the spoon you'd been eating strawberries with. You oughtn't to do that, Kid; you'll lick some of the silver off, and it 'll make you sick."

The impervious Conley reached for more ham.

"Yes, I'd like to stay," Brennan continued, "but I got your interests at heart. You'll be a sick man if you keep up this struggle for the chicken-eating championship. You're not a temperate eater, Kid. Five pieces of fried chicken at one meal—it's really dissipation. Besides that, you

been punishing too much mince pie. You might stand up under it for a while, but it 'll get you in time. You ain't got the constitution for it."

"I'm all right; you lemme alone," the Kid protested.

"Nope, old scout! We got to move—to-night or to-morrow night. This Southern atmosphere's taking away your ambition, and it's doing the same thing to me. Why, a few more days of this and I'd want to settle down in Dixie with a little black-eyed damsel like Miss Lucy—"

Brennan drifted away mentally into a picture of happy domesticity. His dream was interrupted, not by Kid Conley's audible eating, but by the arrival in the dining-room of a stranger, preceded by Mrs. Christie.

"A new guest," she announced. "Mr. William Tickham Bowers, of Chicago."

Bernardo the Great always used his real name in private life. He bowed gravely as the introductions were accomplished. Lucy appeared and was presented. When he was at table the grandmother and granddaughter sat, too, and the conversation was informal and most friendly.

"Mr. Conley was in war production, and is recuperating," Mrs. Christie explained.

"And Mr. Brennan was in the naval intelligence," Lucy added.

The new guest eyed the two men, and was puzzled to understand the evident respect that was accorded them. Perhaps he was a bit piqued, for Bernardo himself was accustomed to bask in the pleasant glare of the spot-light on all occasions.

"Something wrong with these birds," he thought to himself, for he had the gift of quick and accurate decision.

"In what line of war production were you engaged, Mr. Conley?" he inquired politely.

The Kid hadn't expected such a question.

"Guns," he said vaguely.

"Black-jacks, more likely," Bernardo thought as he turned to Brennan. "I had a nephew in the naval intelligence," he said with a friendly smile—"Commander Bowers. He was stationed in Holland. I wonder if by any chance you knew him?"

The look of hopeful pride in the eye of the stranger tempted Brennan, and he fell.

"Not personally, I regret to say," he pleaded; "but, of course, we all knew of his work. A very fine man!"

"All right—you're a liar," Bernardo said inwardly as he beamed happily on the crook.

"Allow me to shake your hand again, sir," he said, playing up to the tone of flattery in Brennan's voice. "It's wonderful, Mrs. Christie, to meet some one who knows what work the boy did over there."

He gripped Brennan's hand heartily across the table, his dark eyes glistening with what seemed to be a great family pride.

"Of course, I can't say in detail what he did, but all of us knew—"

Brennan was playing safe, but Bernardo waived the explanation.

"I understand," he said. "None of us in the family know the full story, but we're mighty proud of the lad, just the same—mighty proud, sir!"

"It is indeed interesting that you two gentlemen should meet in my house," Mrs. Christie said. "It makes it so much more pleasant."

"And, Mr. Bowers," Lucy exclaimed, "we do have such interesting times. Mr. Brennan and Mr. Conley can read each other's minds. You can hide anything in a room, and either one of them can come in and find it. It's perfectly wonderful!"

"It's nothing but simple telepathy, Lucy," Mrs. Christie remarked. "But even more wonderful," she told Bernardo, "we're going to send messages through the air by mind vibrations, aren't we, Mr. Brennan?"

Before he replied, Brennan gave a cautious glance at Bernardo, who looked at the moment so deeply impressed, so delightfully innocent, that he felt no hesitancy in answering affirmatively.

"We are, most surely," he replied boldly.

It was the only thing to do—to include the new arrival with the two women and carry the plan through.

"I'm a believer myself," Bernardo stated; "although I don't say much about it—people are so likely to misunderstand."

"So I've found," said Brennan. "I never care to make any experiments unless I'm sure the people present have a genuine interest in the subject from a scientific view-point."

"You just wait until to-night, and you'll be surprised," Lucy told Bernardo exuberantly.

VI

After the meal was finished and the two crooks were alone in their room, Kid Con-

"A LITTLE VICIOUS, EH? SIT DOWN, MR. CONLEY. LET ME FINISH. I'M GETTING A VISION OF A PENITENTIARY NOW—"

"Listen, Kid—your uncle is on the job all the time. I'll kid the teeth out of him. I don't know but what I'll get away with his gold watch, just for the fun of it."

Brennan's confident attitude persisted that evening at the parlor séance. Working with the Kid, he found a pocket-knife that Bernardo himself hid; the Kid readily located Mrs. Christie's spectacles, and Brennan again went straight to a ring that Lucy had concealed behind the vase on the *secrétaire*.

"It's the power of mind over matter," Brennan announced smoothly when the lights had been turned on. "Conley and I are in such perfect mental accord that our thoughts play backward and forward between us almost as freely as the spoken word."

Bernardo nodded and rose to his feet, pausing impressively before speaking, and running his long fingers through his mass of black hair. There was an enthusiastic glitter in his eye that was almost fanatical. Before him was his audience—he was again

ley, with some sort of animal instinct, began to worry Brennan with suspicion.

"The old guy don't look right to me," he asserted. "There's somethin' about him that makes me feel kinda nervous."

But Brennan, filled with the confidence of youth and an abiding pride in his own cleverness, laughed at the Kid's warning.

"Don't weaken, Kid," he said. "I thought myself, for a minute, that maybe he was wrong, but I sized him up at the table, and he's a cinch. He's just an old rube."

"Well, he don't look good to me."

the Bernardo the Great of the stage. The consciousness that all eyes were staring at him stimulated him to the rare, magnetic pitch that always made him effective.

With a truer psychology than that of Brennan, he was completely certain of his power to dominate. He appeared to be keyed up with suppressed excitement; yet in reality he was smoothly calm.

First, he played the trick of inspiring curiosity and a creepy feeling in his audience. It was a method that he had tested before a thousand audiences — that erect pose, that vague, far-away expression in the eye, those few effective moments of silence and suspense.

"I, too, am a mystic," he said with mystery in his voice. "There are moments when my inner sight—my subliminal self—gathers powers and vision, and all things stand revealed to me in a mighty flash of great cosmic understanding."

Brennan's eyes darted quickly to the Kid and then back to Bernardo. Mrs. Christie and the girl were eagerly expectant.

"I'll show you a sample of this strange power," Bernardo went on, speaking more naturally. He drew a small pad of notepaper from his pocket. "Just write down a couple of questions, please, and don't let me see them," he said, handing it to Mrs. Christie. "Anything you like; it doesn't matter. I do this merely to show how easily the mind can be read."

"But I don't know just what to write."

"Anything that occurs to your mind, Mrs. Christie—a little epigram, a little snatch of verse, a significant date in history."

A thought came to the hostess, and she wrote very deliberately. When she had finished, Bernardo took the pad from her, averting his face so that he could not see what she had written. He tore off the sheet, handed it back to her, and slipped the pad and the pencil back into his pocket.

"Now, if you'll show it to the others, please, I'll leave the room while you all concentrate on what has been written."

Brennan's anxiety vanished.

"The old duffer's a joke," he whispered to Conley. "I knew that trick when I was eight years old."

Bernardo reentered the parlor after a moment's absence.

"The first question," he announced, with a hand clamped thoughtfully to his brow, "is: 'Who was the South's greatest man?' Is that correct?"

"It is," Mrs. Christie said.

"'Robert E. Lee' is the answer to that question."

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Lucy.

"All telepathy is wonderful," her grandmother asserted gravely.

"The second question is: 'Who was the South's greatest woman?' And I will answer that question, Mrs. Christie, by saying that the choice lies between Miss Lucy and yourself. In my estimation, whichever one was responsible for those delicious biscuits we had to-night deserves the palm."

Bernardo smilingly bowed to both of them.

"Now you're joking," the aged woman protested.

"Many a true word, madam, is spoken in jest. Who shall say that the woman who ministers to man's primal wants is not truly great?"

Brennan applauded mildly and politely.

"Men are all alike—you're all flatterers," Mrs. Christie remarked with a momentary return of her youthful vivacity. "It's been a pleasant and instructive evening, gentlemen, and I've thoroughly enjoyed it. Come, Lucy; it's after ten, and time for us to retire and leave the gentlemen to their smoking."

VII

LEFT to themselves, the men lit cigars.

"The marvels of mental force—" Bernardo began, but he was interrupted by the smiling, sarcastic Brennan.

"Nix, nix, brother! Say—that old trick about answering the questions. How do *you* work it? I used to smear a smudge of carbon on the bottom of the second sheet, and read the message on the third."

Back in Bernardo's brain was the recollection of his boyhood days, when he delighted in such simple tricks as the one that he had just performed. It was that early fondness for deception that had led him upon the stage. Like most tricksters, he was always equipped to perform a simple illusion, which accounted for his having the prepared pad of paper at hand.

He looked at the two smiling crooks with a serious expression.

"Also, I can do mind-reading," he insisted. "I can tell things that would surprise you."

"Don't make me laugh!" cried the Kid.

"That's all right—that's all right," Brennan said with mock sympathy. "You're

O. K., brother. Kid the ladies along, if you want to, but don't hand us that stuff!"

"But I can read minds, and I can tell the past and the future," Bernardo asserted firmly. "For instance, you two gentlemen are going to eat your last meal in this house in the morning."

"How do you get that way?" Brennan demanded, amused.

Bernardo regarded the pair quizzically.

"No, I'm wrong. You've already had your last meal here. I can see a couple of disappointed wise guys beating it down to catch a midnight train that will take them far, far away from here. Of course, I can't see their past very clearly—but I suppose almost any good Bertillon gallery would have it. Any well-informed police chief could give it to me, if necessary."

Even the slow-witted Kid got his meaning. Brennan was white-faced.

"What are you talking about?" he demanded with a feeble effort at bluff.

"Just a little mind-reading—clairvoyance, some call it," Bernardo replied smoothly. "I don't pretend to tell everything. For instance, I couldn't say exactly at this minute just what all the details of the game were; but I seem to naturally smell the old bunk at work around here. Lot of valuable swag in this old home—"

Kid Conley hulked to a standing posture.

"A little vicious, eh? Sit down, Mr. Conley. Let me finish. I'm getting a vision of a penitentiary now—"

Brennan bounded to his feet.

"Come on, Kid," he cried, nervously but prudently. "Let's beat it!"

Bernardo, leaning back comfortably in his chair, puffed his cigar.

"Don't forget to leave twenty dollars for your board-bill—both of you—and you'd better slip about a five-buck tip apiece on the pillow for the maid. I'll just glance in the room, to see if the money's there, so I won't have to phone the sheriff to collect it at the station."

"There ain't no maid here," Conley protested.

"Never mind—we'll leave it," Brennan hastened to say.

"Too bad you boys couldn't be satisfied with all this good home cooking!" Bernardo mused. "Living down here in the land of milk and honey didn't seem to satisfy, eh? Well, some people have strange tastes. Now take General Lee—he was satisfied here."

But the two had mounted the stairs and were out of hearing. When they came down with their grips, they stopped at the door.

"No hard feelings, pal, I hope," Brennan said diplomatically. With more imagination than the Kid, he realized how many dire possibilities lay in the hand of the stranger who had seen and blocked their game. "We left the money. You can look and see."

"No hard feelings, exactly," the professional exponent of magic answered; "but it isn't polite to show up a man's tricks. It hurts his vanity. Now, I didn't string you about the old watch-gag in locating lost articles, did I? No. It wouldn't have been well-bred."

The Kid tugged at his companion's arm.

"Come on," he pleaded. "Let's move!"

Bernardo rose and produced a card-case.

"My card," he said, handing it to Brennan. "I open again in about six weeks up around St. Louis. Come and see the show."

"No!" boomed the Kid.

"Well, anyway—" He followed them out upon the veranda. "If you ever see my nephew in the naval intelligence division, Brennan, give him my regards. I've never met the boy. In fact, I never heard of him before."

He stood for a few minutes in the moonlight and watched the two figures disappear down the road. Then he entered the house, clicked off the lights, and mounted the stairs toward his bedroom—his mind occupied with the pleasant anticipation of a home-cooked breakfast in the morning.

YOU CAST THE DIE

You cast the die; now be no coward of life,
Nor beg caresses from its unsheathed knife;
You knew the hard conditions, and you knew,
If you stood faltering, what waited you.
Know also in that last unequal strife
The brave man often wins where cowards sue!

Harry Kemp

The Great Industry of Stealing Automobiles

THE TREMENDOUS PROPORTIONS TO WHICH THE THEFT OF MOTOR-CARS HAS GROWN IN THIS COUNTRY, AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PUT AN END TO IT

By Alexander C. Johnston

Editor of "Motor"

EIGHTEEN hundred years ago a crotchety old Roman named Juvenal wrote a vitriolic satire on the morals of his age, and, dwelling upon its dishonesty, asserted that it was scarcely safe for a Roman gentleman to leave his chariot in the street while he paid a call, lest the vehicle be appropriated by the light-fingered gentry by whom the capital was infested. I tremble to think of what would happen to Juvenal if he were to revisit these mortal realms as an American and attempt to write a satire on this phase of our modern life. Probably he would burst his spleen or grill himself in the heat of his own sizzling adjectives.

For in this country to-day one-tenth of all the motor-cars annually produced are stolen. During the year 1918, two hundred thousand cars were feloniously appropriated. During that same year the automobile industry, if it had been working at normal speed, would have produced approximately two million cars — a number which reduces the percentage quoted above to cold figures. As a matter of fact, owing to abnormal conditions begotten of the war, the production of motor-cars during 1918 was barely one million, so that the proportion of thefts was actually one in five cars produced. Juvenal did not condescend to statistics in relation to the purloining of Roman chariots, but we are surely justified in believing that our proud record would leave him gasping with amazement.

No other product of human industry has ever been so promiscuously stolen as the motor-car is in America to-day. Not even currency itself can claim a record of thefts equaling one-tenth of its total issuance each year. Within the past few years automobile stealing has advanced from casual and sporadic outbreaks to a business, an industry—one might almost call it a science —under the bar sinister. And frankly, the end is not yet, even though the matter has come up for the attention of the House of Representatives.

It is the misfortune of the automobile that in its own mechanical person it supplies the thief with the incentive to steal, and also provides him with the means of performing the operation. The car itself is property of value, the average for American cars being two thousand dollars. It is readily salable, for every normal human being would like to have one, and by its speed and inconspicuousness it provides the thief with an ideal "getaway." The car stolen in one block joins the stream of passing cars in the next thoroughfare, and is instantly swallowed up in a multitude of similar vehicles, hundreds of which may be of the same make and model, differing by not one bolt or tie-rod.

Talk about hunting for a needle in a haystack! Give each needle a speed of sixty miles an hour, and then try to find one particular needle in a haystack made up of nothing but needles—that comes nearer stating the case.

METHODS OF THE MASTER THIEF

The modern professional automobile thief is the most thoroughly competent

practitioner on earth. You may lock your car with all the locks you can find; you may chain it with nickel-steel chains; you may burden it down with thief-proof devices, but you may make up your mind that if a *bona-fide* automobile thief has determined to have your car, you are going to lose it. Don't imagine, however, that I mean to imply that all automobile locks are worthless, for they are not—but we shall come to that a little later on.

The professional automobile thief has usually been a chauffeur. He has probably worked in a garage, repair-shop, service-station, or even in an automobile factory. He is a master mechanic, and knows every nut and bolt on the car, every piece of equipment that may or may not be installed, every device that has been designed for preventing car-stealing, better than the men who design cars, equipment, and devices.

This master among thieves has a method of overcoming every impediment that is placed in his way, and as fast as new ones are invented he finds a way to meet them. If conditions are not propitious for working at the mechanism of the car, in order to circumvent the owner's precautions, the light-fingered gentleman is no whit disconcerted. He only has to bring upon the scene his service car—strangely named for such work—and tow away the prize to a more convenient location, where he completes at leisure the task of restoring his loot to running condition.

Automobile thieves work in gangs. They have a headquarters, a well-equipped garage, which frequently does an honest business as a side-line, or perhaps as camouflage. Some of these thieves' garages have completely equipped machine-shops, where major operations can be carried out, even to the building of a car, if the owners ever desire to waste so much time.

As soon as the gang steals a car it is brought right up to the garage. Numbers and identification-marks are removed. The mechanism is gone over and put in first-class condition. The body is sent to the paint-shop, another department of this interesting organization, and comes forth in a new coat of different color from its original hue. In many of these thieves' garages it is the custom to hold cars until two or three more of the same make or model have been stolen, and then to tear down and rebuild all of them, redistributing the parts, so as to make future identification practically impossible.

SPECIALIZATION THE LATEST WRINKLE

But the development of the car-stealing industry does not stop even here. The latest wrinkle is specialization. That is to say, a gang of thieves selects some popular make of car and confines its attention to that particular line. The garage is fitted up with exactly the machinery needed to deal with the gang's special car. It becomes a sort of piratical service-station for vehicles of its special model. Naturally work flows along with far more precision than is the case where all sorts and conditions of cars are handled.

The next step will probably be specialization in yearly models of popular makes, one gang stealing only 1918 Hudsons, while another band may confine itself to 1919 Packards or 1920 Studebakers. It is pleasant to see these amiable gentlemen thus reducing their business to exact order, and achieving organization along the lines of modern economic efficiency.

Not long ago there died in New York a man who had made a fortune of half a million dollars out of stolen automobiles. He was the first person who applied real business methods to this ingenious industry, and he reaped his reward, though he died eventually of a nervous disorder brought on by his risky method of existence.

This man was a wholesaler in stolen machines. He had many gangs and innumerable single operators working for him. He rebuilt cars, and on occasions actually sold back to the original owner a vehicle that had passed through his factory. He shipped his loot to all parts of the country, as the market varied or the chase became hot. He was arrested scores of times, but in spite of the fact that the police knew that he was the man higher up in the game, they never were able to secure a conviction. This individual was the first large-scale operator in stolen automobiles, but he has many imitators to-day.

DEPREDATIONS OF THE JOY-RIDER

Considering the uncanny skill of the professional thief, it is extremely fortunate that he is comparatively few in numbers, otherwise few cars would remain long in the hands of their legal owners. Not much more than one-third or one-quarter of the cars stolen are taken by professional

thieves. The great majority of purloined machines fall into the hands of what is somewhat loosely termed the "joy-rider"—the idle youth fond of motoring, but pecuniarily unable to gratify his taste, who adjusts the little inequalities of the modern economic system by appropriating some one else's car.

The thief of this class—for he is a thief in spite of the fact that he may not intend to turn the stolen car into cash—will probably resent having the name applied to him. It would be hard to guess just what the joy-rider terms his act when he drives away a car that does not belong to him; but judging from the excuses he offers in court, when he is caught, it is safe to say that he displays an extraordinary degree of mental obliquity.

In many cases, no doubt, the joy-rider acts more or less upon impulse. He appropriates a car when he finds one unguarded and unprotected. He is probably not a finished mechanic; he would be unable to solve any intricate puzzles, or to locate such things as hidden switches. It is against this class of thief that the various types of automobile-locking devices and hidden puzzles are effective. Since the joy-rider does more than half the stealing, it follows that car locks are more than fifty per cent effective in protecting a car. Indeed, this fact is established on the highest authority—that of the insurance companies that accept motor-car risks.

THE VARIOUS TYPES OF LOCKS

The insurance companies have a direct pecuniary interest in this subject of car thefts, and they have taken every means possible to stamp out or check the practise. As part of their campaign, they made an exhaustive investigation of locks, examining not only the general value of locking the car, but also the relative effectiveness of the different types of locks now on the market. Before we consider the various types of locks, let us say that the insurance companies thought so well of the principle that they have offered a rebate on the premium of theft policies, in case the car is fitted with a type of lock approved by the underwriters.

Automobile locks may be divided into three general groups. One of these locks the transmission in such a way that the gears cannot be shifted, hence the car is powerless to move. A second group locks the steering system, some holding the wheels in one position, so that the car cannot be steered, while others release the steering wheel, so that it swings loose on the post, preventing steering in that way. Another group applies the lock to the ignition system or to the fuel system, though the latter is not so common.

Certain locks in each of these groups have passed the rigid tests to which they have been subjected by the insurance experts, and it is these that the car-owner must fit on his vehicle if he is to get the rebate on his theft premium. Let the owner, therefore, be sure that he is selecting an approved lock before he has any such equipment placed on his machine.

Wise car-owners have long recognized the fact that in a majority of cases it is only necessary to place some slight impediment in the thief's way, in order to save the car from being stolen. Ingenious motorists have therefore evolved various puzzles, which in themselves will serve to circumvent the mere joy-rider, and which in conjunction with a lock, will give even the professional thief some thoughtful moments, enough, very possibly, to prevent him from carrying out his nefarious plot.

PUZZLES TO CIRCUMVENT THE THIEVES

To begin with, here is a little bit of guile that will fool almost any thief—for a while. On a car equipped with magneto ignition, remove the carbon pencil which carries the current. Of course the car will not move as long as the circuit is thus interrupted. But the professional thief will carry a spare pencil in his kit, and, slipping it in place, will drive the car away in about thirty seconds.

But here is the joker—make a dummy pencil, removing the metal end from a regular part, or have a wooden one made and painted to resemble the original. Slip this dummy into place, and the thief who examines the magneto, and finds it apparently ready for business, will be puzzled for some time before he discovers the real cause of the trouble.

When the battery system is used for ignition instead of a magneto, a similar dodge is to remove the brush from the distributer. Here again the professional will come prepared with a spare brush. The truly ingenious car-owner, therefore, will set a small steel peg in the post on which the brush rests, and will cut a small slit for it to fit into. So fixed, the thief will

not be able to use his spare brush, as it will not fit over the peg, but will be raised up, effectually preventing the top from being put in place.

Hidden switches in the ignition and fuel lines have been used so much that nowadays even the apprentice in thievery has gumption enough to follow the line until he has located the particular switch in which he is interested.

If, however, the car-owner has placed one switch in a reasonably obscure location, and has hidden another in a still more difficult place, the second switch will bother any but the really expert thief for some precious minutes.

There is another switch arrangement which has not been much used, and which is for that very reason quite effective. This is a switch in the exhaust system, which completely shuts off the power of the engine. The thief will go over the fuel line, and then the ignition, and, finding them both in apparent operating condition, will be puzzled to know just what is the trouble. But let me drop a hint—do not try to turn a switch in the exhaust line with the bare hand. Use a pair of pliers; otherwise you will lose a considerable area of useful skin.

One rather vengeful owner of my acquaintance wired the hood-holders of his engine, so that when he left the car he could throw a generous current into them. In this way any thief who attempted to lift the hood to investigate the engine would get a shock that would make him regret his attempt for some minutes.

MORE DRASTIC MEASURES NEEDED

But when all is said and done, locks and switches and other mechanical thief-bedevilers of any description whatsoever are only partially successful in solving the great problem of preventing motor-car stealing. What we need is something drastic and far-reaching that will cut the ground out from under the thief's feet. We need some method of preventing car-stealing as a whole, and not a hundred methods of preventing individual cars from being stolen.

To begin with, our method of government favors the automobile thief. Each of our States makes its own police laws, in which category fall the enactments for dealing with the theft of automobiles. Some States have passed very drastic statutes against this crime, while others have no adequate laws. As the matter stands, it is the simplest matter in the world for a thief to steal a car in a State having stringent laws, and to drive it over into one with weak laws before he disposes of it.

Perhaps the best method of meeting this situation is to declare an automobile driven from one State to another an object of interstate commerce, whereupon it would come under the Federal laws that govern the whole country. If this condition were once brought about, Congress could pass stringent statutes with respect to automobile theft, and this would undoubtedly be helpful in breaking up the practise. There is now before the House of Representatives in Washington a bill declaring an automobile driven over State lines an instrument of interstate commerce, and providing heavy penalties for the crime of stealing it. Motorists will watch the course of this bill with keen interest.

From all the foregoing the patient reader may be pardoned if he brings away a somewhat pessimistic view of a really pressing problem. If he were to become imbued with the feeling that automobile stealing is something that must always exist, which we can only hope to palliate but not cure, I for one would not blame him—and yet this view of the matter is entirely wrong.

A NEW GENERAL LAW SUGGESTED

I submit that it is possible to end motor-car stealing at any time that we make up our minds to the promulgation of a very simple law. The trouble so far has been that we have handled the matter in the wrong way. We have been treating the symptoms, instead of attacking the cause of the evil. We have punished the thieves when we caught them, which was not very often, but we have allowed the automobile to remain such an easily stolen and readily negotiated piece of property that a fourteen-year-old boy can make twelve hundred dollars in a single day by stealing cars, as recently happened in an Eastern city. The boy was caught, by the way, but the man higher up, who disposed of the stolen cars, paying his youthful operator four hundred dollars for each car he stole, escaped. We have treated the effect, but have permitted the cause to continue.

My suggestion hinges on the possibility of removing motor-cars from the class of casually negotiable property. At first

glance this may seem difficult; in reality it might easily be accomplished by placing them in the same class with real estate, giving each car a title and a deed, which must pass whenever it changes hands, and without which it can no more be sold than a piece of real estate that is not registered in the name of the intending seller.

The beauty of this scheme lies in the fact that it strikes at the very root of the evil. By removing the casual resale value of the motor-car, the incentive to theft has been taken away. The thief will not take the trouble to steal something which he cannot subsequently turn into cash—and there you are.

There are more or less obvious objections that may be raised against this scheme, and we may as well examine them now.

In the first place it will be said that to compel the car-owner to register his title to a car each time he buys one, would be to wrap more red tape about something that is rapidly becoming a prime factor in our every-day life. It is regrettable that motoring should be wrapped in red tape, but car-owners generally would probably welcome this extra strand of formality in order to secure certainty of possession of a piece of property having an average value of two thousand dollars. The trouble of filing title-deeds would not equal the annoyance, to say nothing of the pecuniary loss, of having one-tenth of our annual car-production stolen each year.

The second argument against the suggested plan will probably be the additional cost involved. It would cost the individual car-owner perhaps two or three dollars to file his proof of ownership, and a little more to have a title searched when he intended to buy a used car. The total would not be a tithe of the present cost of insuring cars against theft; and be it noted that theft-insurance premiums have been steadily mounting during the past few years, with no end in sight.

Obviously, to make a law of this kind effective, it must be in force throughout the country, and not merely in a few States. Very well, it can easily be made national. It may be possible to get a Federal law enacted, on the ground that motor-cars are instruments of interstate commerce. Remember that we have a national bird-conservation law, made possible because our lawmakers considered migratory birds as coming under the head of interstate commerce. There is reason to hope for a Federal automobile law.

But even if it is necessary to get the individual States to act, there is every reason to hope for a favorable outcome. Let a State such as New York pass such a law as I have suggested, and the attention of the whole country will be called to the matter. The motoring community is now so powerful, embracing one-quarter of our entire population, and the most influential quarter at that, that it can quickly force the adoption of such measures as may seem necessary to it.

Furthermore, there is every reason why politicians should favor this idea. It will add some millions of dollars annually to the State's funds and provide jobs for some good Democrats or Republicans—whichever may be the party in power. For once the interests of the politicians and those of the public will be the same.

It only remains for the organizations that represent and serve the motoring community to launch a campaign for this needed reform. With the assistance they could count on from various chambers of commerce and other civic bodies, they could soon place the automobile outside the consideration of the now triumphant thief.

GOOD MEN AND TRUE

Oh, yes, my friend, there are a few
Good men and true, good men and true,
In life's great motley throng, whose tread
Is marching onward to the dead.
They're known to me, they're known to you—
Good men and true, good men and true;
They help the poor, the maimed, the blind,
They help the world they leave behind.
God bless them and increase their kind!
Good men and true, good men and true!

Lee J. Burt

Bones of Better Men

BY HERMAN HOWARD MATTESON

Illustrated by W. K. Starrett

SHE glanced at the tiny ship's clock ticking upon the cabin wall. Two bells! At four bells, ten o'clock, while it would be dark, moonless, the tide would be at ebb. Then the sealer would weigh, drift out, and beat through the Straits of Fuca to the broad Pacific. Already the contrary wind was blowing in, moaning through the fir and cedar with a voice like that of the island Indians when they chant the dirge of supreme sorrow.

At four bells, Kim Morris was due to sail. She might never see him again—probably would not. With the realization of final, irrevocable separation came such a flood of affection, of longing, that sophistries and arguments fled her heart as shadows dissolve before a strong light.

She loved Kim Morris. She had never really loved the cold, perfect man who had married her, and had sailed away, never to return. She loved Kim Morris—always had loved him, always would love him.

Three bells! The uncompromising, cold metal note was as the signal recalling a nun to her devotions. She loved Kim Morris, but that love might never seek the light, must always remain cloistered in the white cell of her affection. Her father had brought with him around the Horn, to the far island of Puget Sound, the New England conscience of his seafaring forebears, and had transmitted it to his daughter, Tsolo. Between her and Kim Morris this conscience reared itself like a granite wall.

A favorite theme of her father's had been "duty," and he was wont to illustrate it by reference to a famous case in British admiralty law. A seaman, cast away on some savage coast, with three mates, had saved himself at the cost of the lives of the other three. The admiralty court, declaring that there came times when it was a man's duty not to live but to die, had the seaman executed for murder.

And here was a case of the deadly parallel. Of all the crew who had sailed upon her husband's ship, the Voyageur, none had ever returned but Kim Morris. With him he had brought the wonderfully carved figurehead from the Voyageur, had set it up in the front yard of Tsolo Smail's cabin, where it gazed ever to sea, far away to sea, to an atoll of the Solomon Islands, where lay the bones of better men.

Bringing home through thousands of perilous miles the wonderful figurehead of the Voyageur had warmed the girl's heart exultantly, for it had been carved in the image of herself by old Opit Thorndyke. For a week she had posed while the old carver, with infinite pains and art, smoothed away the surplusage of white fir-wood, leaving finally a likeness that was strikingly faithful.

The head and bust of the figure completed, Opit had fastened it to a base with a great wooden screw, and this, in turn, had been bolted to the Voyageur's billet-head. Thus, with a heroic replica of herself bunting the seas, the Voyageur had sailed away, in the skipper's cabin her husband of a fortnight, in the forecastle her discarded, unworthy lover, Kim Morris.

Many times, before the fatal word had come, her lively woman's fancy had romanced while it traveled afar with the Voyageur. She could picture her husband looking upon the figure with a sense of cold proprietorship. She could visualize Kim Morris, standing at the wheel, laying his course by the proud, graven image of the sweetheart who had cast him off. Then, in imagination, she would explore the moody secrets of Kim's unruly, lawless heart, and would start back affrighted by what she found there.

At four bells the sealer was to sail, with Kim Morris aboard. He might never return, probably never would return, though

KIM STOOD WITH ONE ARM ABOUT THE FIGUREHEAD. THE CHIEF, THINKING THE FIGURE SOME POTENT WHITE MAN'S FETISH, HAD STAYED HIS WARRIORS' HANDS

Hiyu Canim, the Siwash medicine-man, who had taken counsel with the spirits of the forest, and consulted the auguries of flying birds, had said that the sea would never claim him.

Tsolo gazed from the cabin window through the gathering darkness. The wind, rising fitfully, swayed the figurehead upon its too slender anchorage of trimmed cedar sapling. Latterly, she had noted, the fret of the winds was loosening the fastenings of the figure, permitting it to turn slightly. Now as she looked, its face seemed to turn toward her, as if it had some portentous secret that it would confide.

For the sake of Kim Morris, and for her own sake, when regrets and vain memories had come upon her, she had asked her father for permission to have the figurehead removed. The hazard at which it had been returned from the far Solomon Islands surely entitled Kim to that consideration; but her father had shaken his head. No; he wished it to remain in place before Tsolo's cabin. And there it remained, a maddening remembrancer to the wives, sisters, and sweethearts of the men who had gone to their deaths in the Voyageur.

II

As boy and girl, Kim and Tsolo had grown up together. They had cruised together, fished, dug clams, and danced at the boisterous celebrations held when a ship came home. Indifferent at first to the mutual attraction that existed between his daughter and the young fisherman sailor, Tsolo's father, upon Kim's return from his first voyage, suddenly turned against the boy, and laid upon the girl his stern command to have no more to do with Kim Morris. He reiterated the command upon his death-bed.

The name of Kim Morris had become an evil name. There was something wild and untamed about the boy that constantly chafed the spirit of the skipper and crew with whom he had shipped. Kim had struck a mate with a pin from the pin-rail. In the forecastle, Kim had been an agitator; had showed the makings of a sea lawyer. Then a smuggling episode, which at first had been considered a boyish prank, came to be seen in a sinister light. The fact that once Kim, alone in a dory, had put out to the aid of a halibuter in distress was remembered now only as proof that the boy had a reckless devil's heart.

When it became apparent that Kim Morris had chosen Tsolo Kennedy to be his wife, the girl was assailed by the dire warnings of old wives and counselors. Added to her father's stern mandate, these warnings had overwhelmed her girlish inclinations, and she had listened passively when Henry Smail paid her austere, unsentimental court.

Smail, a man considerably older than Kim, had been able seaman, mate, then skipper. Now he was both skipper and owner. Astute in trading, firm but fair in discipline, he had both a ship afloat and a cabin ashore. They were married. Tsolo Kennedy had married a man—everybody in the village said so.

Old Opit Thorndyke was a relic of the days of the clipper ship, who, from modeling noble figureheads for noble ships fifty years before, had, with his fortune's ebb, taken to carving and selling the sailors' trinkets called "scrimshaws." He gazed longingly upon the Voyageur, the prow of which bore only a simple billet-head. Afterward it was recalled that Kim Morris had suggested that Opit should be commissioned to carve the figure, with Tsolo as a model.

Without enthusiasm, Henry Smail had consented, and Tsolo posed for the old carver. The figure completed, it was viewed by the whole village and pronounced a perfect likeness. Long after the throng had departed from before Opit's little shop, there remained standing beside the figure in the gathering darkness, Opit Thorndyke, Hiyu Canim, the Siwash medicine-man, and Kim Morris.

The figurehead was bolted into place on the Voyageur's prow, supplies were loaded, hatches battened, the mainsail hoisted, the anchor weighed. The Voyageur was destined for the south seas and beyond, to trade, to load with copra and the dried flesh of the sea slug called bêche-de-mer.

Smail, who had been too busy to put back ashore for a farewell word with his bride of a fortnight, waved her good-by from the rail. A dory shot out from shore. The Indian oarsman ranged his craft alongside the Voyageur. Kim Morris, from the dory, called to Smail to know if there was still berth on board for an able seaman.

Henry Smail squinted his eyes, wrinkled his brow. Kim Morris had an evil name with skippers. Where Kim Morris was, on deck or in the glory-hole, which is the fo'c'sle, there trouble was. On shore, alone

"SURE I SAY A STRONG SPELL," HE REPEATED. "WHITE MAN'S TALK SAY IT 'GOOD FORTUNE GO EVER WITH THIS FIGURE AND BRING HAPPY TO ITS SHADOW'"

for six months at least, was the skipper's wife. Of course he trusted Tsolo. Still—

Skipper Smail nodded his head, waved his hand for Kim to come on, and the young man swarmed the side with his ditty-bag upon his back.

Six months elapsed. No word of the Voyageur. Still a second six months. The underwriters notified the widow of Henry Smail that they had listed the Voyageur as lost. Within the third six months they paid her the insurance money, and advised her that the Voyageur had been lost at sea with all hands, somewhere off the Solomons.

III

A TRAMP ship that had come from Makassar through the Banda Sea, put in at the Puget Sound Island for an overhaul and a stepping of new masts. Her anchors let go. Over the side, into a dory that he had hailed, Kim Morris lowered away a great bundle wrapped about in clean tarpaulin.

With no word to a soul of the village,

even Tsolo Smail, Kim carried the bundle to the yard of Tsolo's cabin, topped and trued a cedar sapling, and bolted in place the figurehead of the Voyageur.

Brief was Kim's story. The Voyageur had won into the Solomons. Buffeted by a terrific hurricane, the ship had made into the shelter of a wide-flung atoll of sand and broken coral. There she had driven upon a reef, had taken a bad list to starboard. At sunrise, a hundred high-prowed canoes had assailed them. In the first flight of Papuan spears, all the crew of the Voyageur had perished save Henry Smail, Lennon, the cook; Brower, a seaman, and himself.

The four survivors had been taken prisoners and thrust into a grass hut ashore, under guard. Kim had escaped, swum back to the ship, unbolted the figurehead, and returned. The Papuans, discovering him, had attacked. A dozen spears were aimed at the breast of Kim Morris, but the old chief held up his hand. Kim stood with one arm about the figurehead. The chief, thinking the figure some potent white man's fetish, had stayed his warriors' hands. More, the old chief had outfitted Morris with a canoe and provisions, and had permitted him to depart, carrying with him the graven image of Tsolo Smail.

These were the details of Kim Morris's story, adding only that he had understood from the actions of the savage chief that Smail, Lennon, and Brower were to be put to death. Kim Morris related it to Tsolo Smail, to the mother of Lennon, the cook, to the sweetheart of Brower.

Lennon, who had been a rat-faced youth, shifty-eyed, a petty liar and thief, had at once been imbued in the generous memory of the village with noble attributes never before discovered. Mrs. Lennon, mother of the departed, flinging her skeleton arm toward the snow-white figurehead in the yard of Tsolo's cabin, would burst into cackling lamentations, denounce Kim Morris for a coward and a poltroon, call Heaven to witness that it was a shame and a profanation for Kim Morris to live when behind him, in the far Solomons, he had left the bones of better men.

Almost proverbial the words became, and the village took them up. There had been Smail, Bowden, Jack Stanley, the ship's carpenter, Hogy Williams, Capstan Culbertson, and the seaman called Bigpaw—better men all than Kim Morris. Their bones lay whitening on an atoll of the Solomons, while Kim Morris had slunk home to claim the widow and the wealth of Skipper Henry Smail.

Then, when weeks passed by and Kim Morris sought no speech with Tsolo other than to relate the details of the tragedy in the Solomons, the village wagged its head and whispered of the cunning that could wait, abide its hour, and still abide.

IV

But now, at four bells, Kim Morris was due to sail for the far-off Bering Sea. Twice or thrice only, and then but briefly, Tsolo had had commonplace speech with him. Often she had seen him standing upon the sand-dune before her cabin, alternately looking at the figurehead, then gazing raptly to sea. Almost overwhelmingly she had felt the urge to go to him, to place her hand in his and say that in him she still had faith.

But pride forbade. Why did not he come to her and say his say like a man?

Hatred against Kim Morris grew apace in the village. This isolated community on a remote island hunted in a primordial pack. Every hand was against him save the hands of Tsolo Smail, Opit Thorndyke, and Hiyu Canim, the medicine-man. No ship clearing that port would have him in the crew. The fishing craft would have none of him.

Presently it became known that the dory of Kim Morris floated out many a night when the moon was in the dark. Kim Morris was smuggling again, first said rumor, then accusation direct.

A sealer had come to anchor off the island for an overhauling and the stepping of a new mast. No secret was made of the desperate undertaking upon which it was bound—poaching seals upon the Russian side of the Bering Sea. Capture by a Russian cruiser meant ten years in the Siberian salt-mines, almost inevitable death.

Craft bound upon such a venture are not apt to be overnice in the selection of a crew. Kim Morris sought a berth upon the pirate sealer, was signed on, and received the rating of mate.

Stealthily Tsolo Smail sought out Hiyu Canim, and told the old medicine-man that she had had a warning dream that Kim Morris would never return from the Bering. The girl swore Hiyu to secrecy, and asked him to convey the warning to Kim Morris.

Hiyu glanced at the girl shrewdly, and shook his head. The dreams of white folk were not dependable guides. He would con-

sult one of the three infallible Indian *tomanawa* first, then convey the verdict to Kim if it carried warning.

Old Hiyu Canim, upon the following day, came shuffling through the sand and paused before the figurehead in the yard. He came no nearer the cabin, so Tsolo went to him.

"Three *tomanawous* spells that never lie," said Hiyu solemnly. "One of the three is the spell of flying sea-gulls. The second is the spell of the seven twigs of the blood-bush. The third is the spell of the tail feathers of a thunder-bird carried in a doeskin-bag with seeds of the plant called sapolil."

Hiyu pointed for vindication to the figurehead.

"See," he exulted, "see how spells of the seven twigs of blood-bush never lie? See? Figurehead come home, though all mans on ship die but Kim Morris."

WITH GLAD CRIES, ALL UNASHAMED, SHE RAN TO HIM AND PRESSED HER LIPS TO HIS

"The figurehead come home! What do you mean, Hiyu?"

"Why," answered Hiyu importantly, "before figurehead is put on ship, I say it a strong spell over it that makes it come home, that saves life of Kim Morris, that some day makes Tsolo Kennedy to be happy."

"You said a spell over the figurehead?"

"Sure, yes. I say it. And figurehead come home. Kim Morris come home. Some day, Tsolo—"

He paused abruptly, regarding her searchingly.

"Sure I say a strong spell," he repeated. "White man's talk say it 'Good fortune go ever with this figure, and bring happy to its shadow.'"

In the Indian belief she was the image's replica, or shadow, instead of its being the replica or image of herself.

Her eyes filled with tears. Old Hiyu had called down a blessing upon the figure. She tried to thank him.

"No thank me," expostulated Hiyu. "He say it to me to make a strong, good *tomanawous*."

"He?" she asked. "Captain Smail, my—my husband?"

Hiyu smiled indulgently, shook his head.

"No, no—not Henry Smail. Kim Morris he say it to me to do a *tomanawous*."

Kim Morris had asked that the Indian blessing be said over the figure—not Henry Smail, but Kim Morris!

She laid her hand upon the wooden image.

"Hiyu," she said in a voice so low that he could hardly catch the words, "tell me about Kim going to the Bering. I'm afraid. Please, Hiyu!"

Sadly the old savage had shaken his head. He would like to say as the girl wished him to say, but he dared not. The augury of flying birds had said that Kim Morris might go safely to the Bering, that the sea would never claim him.

"But the mines," she had argued. "Not the sea, but the hazard of the salt-mines."

"I don't know," he had answered briefly. "Spell just say sea will never claim him. I don't know."

The hands of the little ship's clock were creeping on toward four bells, the hour when the sealer was due to weigh. Her face pressed against the window-pane, Tsolo stared into the darkness, listened to the rising gale, prayed that the storm might delay the departure of the ship until morning. Then, pride or no pride, she would go to Kim Morris. She would! She would!

As if in answer to the prayer, the wind came tearing at the shakes of the roof, swaying the figurehead upon its pedestal until at times it twisted about, facing the cabin, and held toward Tsolo the threatening sword in the uplifted hand.

Heavy footsteps sounded upon the step. There was a knock. Wrapped about in oilskins, a sou'wester upon his head, Kim Morris stood upon the threshold.

"I'm going, Tsolo," he said simply. "I hain't got much to say. I put off till now to say it, for—well, I know what folks of this village think and say about me. Remember once, Tsolo, when I and you went clamming to Shelter Cove? Remember? I hain't never changed, except that it's grown stronger with the days. It's no use, though. Something is there, between us, like a cliff—the bad name of Kim Morris. Maybe it 'll always be a bad name. I just thought I'd wait to the last minute to say it, then go. I love you like then, Tsolo, only stronger. Good-by—I'm going!"

She thrust forth her arms against the whipping gale, and called his name:

"Kim! Kim!"

But he was gone. Her only answer was the roar of the sea, the requiem of the wind, the creaking of the figurehead.

V

THE sealer was weighing. She could see the men as they hoisted away the anchor. The riding-light of the craft swayed like a pendulum. For a long time she could follow the light, then it blinked out in the spume and spray of the driving waters. Close-hauled, the sealer was beating out to sea.

Then, again, with fresh access of fury, the wind howled and shrieked. There sounded a crash. The figurehead, torn from its base, lay buffeted by the wind and by the rain that had commenced to fall.

A lighted ship's lantern in her hand, Tsolo leaned to the storm, made her way into the yard, stood beside the prostrate figure.

The wooden screw which had held the upper part of the graven image in place had broken off. She laid hold of the jagged bit of wood. It turned easily in her hand, and there in the hollow of the image was a bit of paper twisted into a tight roll.

She ran to the house, and with trembling hands unwrapped the paper. It was a closely written page torn from the log-book of the Voyageur. The writing was the precise, legible hand of Henry Smail:

This is my last entry in the log of the Voyageur. I shall hide this page in the base of the figurehead. The Papuans think the figure a god image. They will not touch it, and some day some one may salvage the figure and find this message.

We four are alive—Smail, master; Morris, quartermaster; Lennon, cook; Brower, seaman.

All others killed by spears of the savages. We four were put in a grass hut under guard. Last night Morris gave us good-by; said he was going to make a try for his life and ours. He worked his way through the atap-grass side of the hut, and made the shore by crawling. God let him swim to the Voyageur. The water is alive with sharks. He planned to unlimber the old four-pounder, fire it into the village, and open with the rifles hidden in the locker of my cabin. Under cover of his fire we were to make a break, seize an outrigger canoe, and put off.

The four-pounder, rifles, everything had been looted by the natives. So Morris unbolted the figurehead, and swam ashore with it in tow. The natives were going to kill him, but the old chief lifted his hand. The Papuans fear any image, thinking it a god. This Morris had counted on. They let him walk to the hut with the image.

"Come on," says Morris. "Walk up bold, but keep close to the figurehead. We'll make the shore and seize a canoe."

Morris motioned for me to take the figurehead. I thrust it before me, and we crawled through the hole. With howls and blows of their spear-hafts they drove us back, all but Morris. They put a crown of feathers on his head, danced around him, led him off. The shark devils had let him swim ashore; he was a shark god.

I must hurry. The Papuans are coming. I can hear their shrieks, the clank of the head-axes. They are coming after us. It's good-by.

One other word—Kim Morris is a man. Himself he could have saved. Kim Morris is a man. They are coming. Good-by.

HENRY SMAIL.
WILLIAM LENNON.
DAVID BROWER.

Tsolo flung open the door. Into the windrows of seaweed that lay along the shore her stumbling footsteps went. Running down the beach until the breakers curled about her feet, she stretched her arms seaward, called his name, and still called until her voice grew hoarse.

Finally, in utter despair, she stumbled her way back to the cabin and sank into a huddled heap upon the floor. There at daybreak she still lay.

Boom! Boom! From afar came the reverberation of the signal-gun. She lifted her head, turned it to listen. *Boom!* A wreck—a ship in distress!

Her breast heaving, her hands pressed to her sides, she ran along the beach in the direction of the life-saving station. By ones, by twos, by half-dozens, the villagers joined her. Without a word the throng ran on, on to where the point of the island commanded a vista of the turbulent open of the Straits of Fuca.

A three-master lay rolling in the trough. Her house was gone. Men were clinging in the rigging of the shattered sticks.

But the life-boat was alongside. A man dropped from the rigging into the sea, a second, a third, a fourth.

The life-boat wallowed, came about, headed for shore. A cable of human arms stretched to it. Up the slope of dank sands they were bringing the four staggering derelicts.

Tsolo would have fallen to the earth but for the supporting hand of an old, wrinkled Indian who came up beside her.

"Look, Tsolo!" said the savage. "See, I say it! Three *tomanawous* spells that never lie. There is Kim Morris. Sea never claim Kim Morris. And some day, the *tomanawous* make Tsolo Kennedy to be happy."

With glad cries, all unashamed, she ran to him, flung her arms about the battered, gigantic form, and pressed her lips to the lips of Kim Morris.

AT EPIPHANY

WHEN I went out to breathe the morn—
The morning of Epiphany—
The frost was white upon the thorn,
And white upon the beechen-tree.

The wind that made the midnight seem
A chaos where wild furies whirled
Had died away, a wonder-dream
Of perfect peace enwrapped the world.

Such was the silence of the snow,
So hushed the starling's slender strain,
Within my soul I felt as though
The Christ indeed had come again!

Clinton Scollard

The Last Straw*

THE WINNING OF A GOOD WOMAN IN THE BAD LANDS

By Harold Titus

Author of "I Conquered," "Bruce of the Circle A," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY LEE CONREY

THE cow-hands at the H. C. Ranch are surprised when the new owner, Jane Hunter, turns out to be an Eastern girl. She chooses Dad Hepburn as foreman by having all the hands draw straws—all except one, Tom Beck, who refuses to participate in the lottery, although had he done so he would have won. Beck lectures Miss Hunter because she drinks cocktails and smokes cigarettes, telling her that the ranch is in bad condition on account of cattle-stealing, and that she will have to change her Eastern manner of living if she is to make good. Piqued, Jane resolves to compel the plain-spoken fellow to like her.

A New York lover, Dick Hilton, appears at the ranch and rebukes Jane for heeding a cow-puncher's advice, but finds that he has lost his hold upon her. Thereupon he is overcome by his passionate temper, threatens to do her bodily harm, and desists only when Tom Beck opportunely arrives. Leaving the ranch, Hilton misses his way on the prairie, but is hospitably received by Bobby Cole, the daughter of a "nester" who threatens trouble for Jane, as he has filed upon a water-hole much used by her cattle. Finding that the Cole girl hates Jane, Dick makes love to her, and joins in the plot against Jane's welfare.

Jane has assigned Beck to the task of teaching her riding and roping, and is much in his company. He finds himself drawn more and more to the beautiful and reckless girl who has become his employer, and resolves to protect her interests with his life, if need be. He suspects that her foreman, Hepburn, is secretly in league with her enemies; and an open clash between the two men comes when Hepburn accuses Beck of shooting at him. The charge is false, but circumstantial evidence is so strong that Tom is saved only by Jane's intervention; and in this crisis she reveals her love for him.

Hepburn leaves the ranch, and Beck takes his place as foreman. The secret warfare that has been waged against Jane now becomes open, her stacks being burned and her cattle killed. Finally, resolved to end it one way or the other, Beck straps on a brace of guns and rides away alone from the H. C. ranch-house.

XVIII

THE fire in Webb's cook-stove was not all that furnished warmth to the seven men in the cabin that night, for they drank frequently from a bottle which, when not passing from hand to hand, was nestled on Dick Hilton's lap, his hands caressing it lovingly.

Sam McKee and three other men played solo on the table, noisily and quarrelsomely, after the manner of their kind. Engrossed in the game, they gave little heed to the talk of the others. It was talk of plots and schemes, of danger and distrust.

Webb's little button eyes were even uglier than usual, Hilton's mouth was drawn in lines that were more cruel than ever, but Hepburn, under influence of the liquor, only became more paternal, more deliberate, as the evening and the drinking went on. He was not nettled by Webb's disfavor, and even smiled on the rancher indulgently as he listened to his querulous plaint.

"If you'd only used yer head an' stayed there," Webb went on, "then we'd hev had it all easy. You could 've stole her blind an' she'd never knew. Then you had to git on the peck about *him!*" He sniffed in disgust.

"Now, Webb, you're too harsh in what you say," the other replied blandly. "I done all I could, but Beck wouldn't be blinded. He's got second sight or somethin'. We had him scotched all right, but

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we hadn't figured on the girl. Nobody thought she was sweet on him."

Hilton stirred uneasily, and the color in his face deepened. He looked at Hepburn with an ugly light in his eyes.

"That upset everything," Hepburn went on. "There wasn't no use tryin' to play a quiet game after that. They both know we want to get rid of 'em the worst way, and now we've got to keep under cover an' use our heads harder 'n ever."

"There's too many in it," Webb whined. "If you'd let me alone, just me an' the boys, I'd felt safer; but now there's Cole an' his daughter, an' half the country."

He flashed an indecisive glance at Hilton, who studied the bottle, frowning.

"Lots in it," Hepburn said heavily; "but they've got to hang together, or—"

"Separately," added Dick cynically.

Hepburn nodded. Webb sniffed and jerked his head petulantly.

"But there's nothin' to fret about," Dad went on. "None of us will leak. Cole can't, because we could put him behind bars by just lettin' on that he'd used his homestead rights under another name, an' had no right on this place, let alone other things. We can use his brand, which is why I brought him in here. I've spread the news that he's bought cows of you, an' between workin' over the H. C. and ventin' your marks we'll have a herd here in a couple of seasons that 'll make us rich. An' we'll have range for 'em, too. She won't stand up under a range war."

"But Beck will," Webb protested.

"He will if you don't get rid of him!" Dad retorted, with slow anger behind the words and a cunning glitter in his eyes. "I don't see how in thunder you missed him. You must 've been drunk."

"He wasn't in his bed, I tell you; he couldn't 've been."

"Well, if I had against him what you got, I'd get him," Hepburn stated emphatically, satisfied that this was a masterly stroke. "He got you laughed at by the whole country."

"You wait!" Webb snarled. "My time's comin'."

"Deliberately, I'd say," Hilton put in ironically.

"Oh, you're always kickin'," Webb protested. "I don't see why you stay on if things here don't satisfy you. You've got to have sheets on your bed, you've got to have your grub cooked different, you've got to sleep late an' have hot water to wash an' shave. You've got into this deal, an' you'd like to run it your way. What do you stay for?"

Hepburn had looked at Hilton's face as if he, too, wondered just why he stayed on; but, pursuing his usual tactics, he said:

"If Mr. Hilton can pay for it, why can't he have his way? He has the money. He's willing to spend it. I'm sure his willingness to stake Cole to fence and help means a lot to all of us. It's goin' to drive her out of the Hole entire this summer. The booze has made you irritable, Webb."

Webb sat forward, elbows on knees, chin in his hands, and grumbled:

"I have to stand a lot, I do. Both of you eggin' me on all the time! I do the best I can, but nothin's ever satisfactory. Nobody ever does anything for me."

"Sho, Webb, that in't so. Didn't Mr. Hilton give you a brand-new automatic? Ain't I been reasonable in turnin' a chance to make good your way?"

The other fidgeted, then looked up at Hilton.

"I don't see what *you've* got such an interest in this for, anyhow. Course, it's none of my business, but I don't see why you should always egg me on about Beck."

"I only want to see the T Bar O prosper," said Hilton mockingly. "That is why I bought fence; that is why I want your friend, the H. C. foreman, out of the way."

He rose, placed the bottle on the table, and stepped out of the house. They heard him walk across the dooryard and into the stable.

"You s'pose he's goin' to meet her again to-night?" Webb growled.

"Likely."

"I wish to hell he'd clear out! I don't see what you wanted to take him in for."

Hepburn chuckled.

"How could you keep him out? The girl, she knows everything, an' what she knows he knows. His money's valuable to us, an' besides, it 'll keep her quiet if we ever do get out on a limb."

Webb looked up in query.

"You're right when you say there's too many in it, Webb; but there's just *one* too many. That's the girl. I can't figure her out; I can't trust her. If we was to try to pass the buck to Cole in a pinch, she'd raise the deuce—that is, if it wasn't for Hilton."

"How's that?"

"IF YOU'LL ALL RISE AND PUT UP YOUR HANDS, WE WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE." TOM BECK, REVOLVER IN EACH HAND, STOOD FRAMED IN THE DOORWAY. HIS—

"If she turned on us, it 'd catch Hilton, an' she's gone on him. I never saw a girl so loyal to her father, but when you bring in a lover her loyalty won't stand up."

"But he ain't on the level with her."

"Makes no difference. She's took to him like girls of her sort do. He can handle her, an' she's the only one that knows

—VOICE WAS LEVEL AND NATURAL, WITH SOMETHING AKIN TO A LAUGH IN IT, BUT WHEN HE SPOKE AGAIN IT WAS A RASP: "GET UP ON YOUR RATTLES, YOU SNAKES, AND PUT UP YOUR HANDS!"

our side who'll ever need any handlin'. He was right when he said the rest of us 'd have to hang together or separately."

Outside, a horseman rode quietly to the gate and sat looking through the open doorway and the one window of the room. He counted the men carefully; counted again, then rode back the way he had come, and stopped and waited.

"But what about the other girl—Hunter?" Webb asked after a silent interval. "Hilton *was* sweet on her, I understand."

Hepburn's eyes kindled.

"His jealousy is another asset. Hilton wanted her an' couldn't get her, an' he knows the reason now—it's Beck. You think he's been practisin' with a rifle an' pistol for the fun of it? Not on your life!"

Hepburn leaned closer. "The time may come, Webb, when Hilton 'll clear Beck out of our way. That 'd be easier. I don't want to try it in the open; I don't guess you do. He's got a

crimp in all the boys. Look at Sam, for instance. He's itchin' to kill Beck, but he ain't got the sand."

"If she ever found out he wasn't on the level with her"—Webb's mind going back to Bobby Cole—"she'd claw him up!"

"Yep. But she's in love, an' love plays hell with men an' women, Webb."

The other started to reply, then sat rigid, listening.

A horse came up the road at a slow trot and halted by the gate. A saddle creaked, then the bars complained as they swung open. A man was whistling lightly as he rode toward the house and dismounted, leaving his horse standing.

"Must be one of the boys," Hepburn said, and settled back. None who had other than friendly business there would come so openly. "I was going to say," he went on, "that they'll be fooled about that Hole range. It's time for the cattle to start comin' in from the desert. They'll get up there, and the creek 'll be an ash-bed with a couple more days of this sun. They can't take 'em back through the gap without a big loss, and if they leave 'em in the Hole without water long enough they can't get 'em up the trail, so—"

"If you'll all rise and put up your hands, we won't have any trouble here—to-night!"

Hepburn looked slowly over his shoulder, slightly bewildered. Webb, who had been stooped forward, raised his eyes, and breath slipped through his lips in a long hiss. Sam McKee, who had reached out to take a trick, let his ace drop from limp fingers. The other three started up like guilty men sharply accused of their crime.

Tom Beck, a revolver in each hand, stood framed in the doorway, bending forward from the hips, his hat back, his eyes burning. His voice had been level and natural, with something akin to a laugh in it, but when he spoke again it was a rasp:

"Get up on your rattles, you snakes, and put up your hands!"

With an oath Hepburn sprang to his feet, faced about, and raised his arms. Webb followed, with jerky movements, his face pallid with fear. The card-players got from their chairs. As McKee's hands went slowly above his head, they trembled like aspen branches in a breeze.

For a moment there was no sound, save Hepburn's heavy breathing. Then Tom Beck let a curious smile run across his lips.

"This is no way to come to talk business," he commented. "I don't like it—but little more than you seem to. It's the safest way for me, though. That's why I'm here, to consider my safety."

He let his gaze run from face to face. Webb's eyes met his squarely, a baleful challenge in them; but as he glared at Hepburn, Hepburn's gaze wavered, flicking back twice, only to drop again. McKee whimpered under his breath. The other three stared back sullenly, alert for an opening.

Beck moved into the room just one step.

"I don't know who it is that's been tryin' to kill me, but it wouldn't take many guesses," he said. Again his eyes ran from face to face. "It might be you, Hepburn, and it might be you, Webb. It's like both of you to shoot from cover—like you accused me of shootin'. It might be McKee, but even that takes more nerve than he's got. I wouldn't put it past any of the rest of you. I didn't come here to try to find out. I got more important things to do than to identify the party right now. I rode over this evening to make a little call, an' to drop the word that if I see any of this outfit anywhere near the H. C. ranch, or on its range, there's goin' to be shootin' a plenty, and if you want to be the first to shoot, you want to draw almighty quick! If any of you see one of my men anywhere, you hit the breeze. It's the best way out of trouble."

Beck paused for a moment, but none of the other men spoke.

"Hepburn," he went on, "you an' Webb tried to frame me once. That's sufficient cause. I'd kill you like I'd kill a scorpion. McKee don't count. You other three are probably in on the threat to drive me out of the country. Just workin' here puts you beyond the law that protects honest men. Now there's a little matter of trouble that's happened around the H. C. That's going to stop from now on. We've got lots of men over there who are handy with their artillery. They're pretty well worked up, too. There won't be a finger lifted to prevent you workin' within your rights, but the first crooked move one of you makes there 'll be a new table-boarder in the devil's kitchen. That's all I come to say. That's all the conversation that 'll be necessary between us from now on. The H. C. is goin' to keep doing business, and it's present owner is going to stay on the

job. As for me, it's been talked around that I was to be drove out, an' all I got to say is, come on and do your driving!"

Beck's mouth set with an expression of finality, and his eyes bored into theirs. He was through, but even as he straightened, preparatory to backing through the doorway into the night, a flicker of cunning crossed Dad Hepburn's face. It was caused by a faint creaking of the stable door—a sound that was unheard by Beck, whose own voice had been in his ears.

"Don't you think you're a little quick in passin' judgment, Tom?" he asked.

Beck laughed shortly.

"Looking for me to handle you with gloves, Dad? After you tried to frame me? After you—" He checked himself short as he was about to accuse Hepburn of one specific act of treachery against the H. C. He might need that later. "After you've tried to get me? Somebody shot at my bed one night; somebody shot at me while I was riding open country one day." At that a look of astonishment swept Webb's face. "There's just one way to handle men like that, and I'm doin' it now, to-night—"

The crash of a shot from behind, the splintering of the door-panel at his shoulder, cut him short. Webb jumped as if the bullet had been sent at him. Hepburn's face contorted into a grimace of elation.

With a catch of his breath Beck wheeled, his senses steeled to this new emergency, driving down the quick panic that wanted to throttle his heart. There in the shaft of yellow light, bareheaded, stepping toward him, with an arm raised to fire again, was Dick Hilton.

It was a situation in which fractions of time were infinitely precious. That first shot had gone wild because the Easterner, unfamiliar with firearms, unnerved by the rage which swept up within him, had let his eagerness have full sway; but now he was stepping forward, coming closer. At that range he could not miss.

Beck saw all that in the split second it required for him to whirl, leaving his back exposed to those other men for the instant. He squeezed the trigger as he flipped his left-hand gun toward his assailant. The two reports sounded almost as one, but the stream of fire from Hilton's weapon, instead of stabbing toward Beck, streaked into the air, and the automatic, ripped from his hand by the same ball that tore his fingers, spun clinking to earth.

But even as it struck, before Beck could turn again to cover the room behind, a swinging palm sent the lamp crashing to the floor. He sprang clear of the doorway. An instant before he had dominated the situation; now he was a fugitive.

Inside, darkness; out in the dooryard, starlight. Inside, ruthless enemies who had listened to a declaration that precluded quarter; outside, their target, who could scarcely hope to live before the fusillade that must come.

"Put up your hands!" Beck gasped, jabbing a gun into Hilton's stomach and springing behind the Easterner's body, screening himself.

Crouched there, peering over the other's shoulder, one gun against Hilton's trembling body, the other thrust past it to cover the doorway, he paused. He heard quick footsteps, an oath, a hurried word; and then the man before him, who breathed through his mouth and trembled so severely that he could scarcely hold his hands erect, cried huskily:

"For God's sake don't shoot, boys! You'll get me!"

After that there passed a moment in which Hilton's breath made the only sound that came to Beck's ears.

"I'm going to back up to my horse," he said lowly. "You follow me."

It was unnecessary to add a threat. There was enough threat in the situation.

Slowly Beck began to back, feeling his way, pushing the one gun harder against Hilton's body, keeping the other ready for instant use should those who watched choose to shoot down the Easterner to be at him. The roan snorted softly in query, and Beck spoke; but the animal, startled by the shooting, unsatisfied that this huddle creeping toward him was wholly friendly, backed off.

Tom spoke again, and then ceased all movement, for from inside had come a muttering, and stealthy footsteps crossed the floor. A door at the rear of the house creaked. One or several had gone out to stalk him. The others, he knew, waited within to seize the first opportunity to kill that might be offered.

"Stand still!" he said sharply to the horse, and turned his head ever so quickly, to see the animal backing slowly.

He moved backward faster for a few

steps, shoving the revolver harder into Hilton's body to insure his obedience, but the horse only progressed as rapidly, snuffing loudly at this strange performance, which no horse could be expected to understand.

THE PONY SNUFFED, AS IF TO TANTALIZE HIMSELF, THEN PLUNGED HIS NOSE INTO THE HOLLOW, GUZZLING GREEDILY

They moved in a circle, swinging in toward the house, Beck ever keeping Hilton as a direct screen. He stopped, and the horse stopped. He listened. He heard soft movements within the house. He thought he heard a faint rustling behind a far corner of the building, but a cow, bawling at the moment, smothered the faint sound.

Beck felt a cold damp standing out on his body. From the darkness, from any direction, disaster might strike at any second.

He began to talk to the horse soothingly, moving toward him slowly, but the roan would not understand. Once he was within an arm's length of the bridle, but before he could grasp it the animal had swung his head ever so slightly and was moving off again, passing a corner of the house, whence the suggestion of a rustle had come.

And then, of a sudden, the horse leaped sidewise with a startled grunt, as a horse will that comes upon a coiled snake. He lunged toward Beck and Hilton, swinging about on his hind feet, and began to run for the gate, thoroughly frightened, and bent on escape.

It was Beck's last chance. As the horse leaped toward the gate, he sprang back a pace from Hilton, raised both guns, and fired—one at the window, one at the doorway. Glass broke and tinkled, and he heard the panel of the door splinter again. As he opened fire, the great roan swerved; his hoofs spurned the ground in the impatience of fright, and Beck, shooting again toward the house, turned and ran swiftly for the fleeing horse.

Down in the shadows the thing which had frightened the horse rose, stumbling into shape. Flame streamed from Beck's

guns toward it, but he shot as he ran, and his fire was inaccurate. He cried sharply, as the animal swung even wider in his circuit toward the gate. He sprang forward in long strides, dropped the gun from his right hand, fastened his fingers about the horn, and vaulted into the saddle.

The animal leaped the half-lowered bar. Beck fired again, twice at the house, once at the figure outside, and then flung himself far down over the roan's shoulder as stabs of flame came from the building and bullets screeched overhead. He fanned the roan's belly with his hat, and twenty rods farther swung into an erect position again, leaning low as they ate the road.

"A close one, old-timer!" he muttered to the horse. "That was a chance!"

"AFTER A WHILE—A WEEK OR SO—I CAN GET HOLD OF THAT STIRRUP—MAYBE," THE MAN SAID HUSKILY

Miles farther on, when the roan had cooled from the desperate dash which had carried Tom to safety for the night, he said aloud:

"Now what was *he* doin' there? And how much will he count?"

XIX

In the days that followed one might have seen, approaching from a distance, a rider for the H. C. He stopped his horse, rode on, stopped again, rode on, and stopped the third time. Had an observer not halted and repeated the performance, the rider would not have come toward him. He had a hand on his holster or his rifle-case. War had been declared, and though Hepburn and Webb and their following hated Tom Beck for the man he was, they respected him and gave heed to his warning to stay away from H. C. property—or at least not to be seen thereabouts.

The war went on, but it was a silent, covert struggle, and though Beck suspected much, he could not possibly know all that happened.

For instance, it was Webb who finally dropped the pliers and declared the job finished, standing back to survey the stout cedars which had been bound together with wire to form a gate for one of the numerous little blind draws that stabbed back into the parapet surrounding Devil's Hole. In the recesses of that draw was a small amount of seeping water—enough, say, to keep young calves alive. From a distance of a hundred yards this barricade of tough boughs and steel strands would not be detected.

Bobby Cole and her father came up from the mouth of the Hole after dusk had fallen, the old horses drawing the wagon along the indistinct path that wound through the sage. They were tired and silent, and finally the girl's head dropped to Cole's shoulder and she slept. His arm was about her, holding her close.

The wagon halted, hours later, before the blocked draw, and, straddled upon their bodies, the girl liberated first one calf, then another, until six had been shoved

from the tail-gate into the hidden pen. Then they drove back toward their cabin.

"Why don't I think it's wrong to steal?" the girl asked soberly.

Alf shook his head.

"It ain't, for us."

"But I've read that it is," she protested, scowling into the darkness. "I read in a book about a man that stole; the book said it was wrong. Why don't I think it's wrong?" She turned her face to him, and he looked down to see, under the starlight, her mouth pathetically drooping, her lips trembling, and the big brown eyes filled with perplexed tears. "Why 'm I so different from other folks? Maybe that's why I never had no friends."

"It ain't wrong for you to steal from her," he said defensively.

The girl looked ahead again.

"No, it can't be. I hate her; I like to steal from her. But why ain't it wrong for me if it's wrong for anybody else?"

"I've allus told you it was the thing to do. Ain't that enough?" her father asked wearily. "Did you see him this mornin'?" he added, as if to change the subject.

Bobby nodded her head.

"He was down. He hurt his hand; got it shut under Webb's window. He—he stayed a long time." Her voice was quite changed; rather soft and reverent. "I'm glad he did. When he's there I feel like I ain't so different—not so awful different from other folks."

Alf did not reply. The wagon chucked heavily on, the brush scratched the wagon-bed, the horses plodded listlessly. Dawn came.

Far out to the north and west of the gap in Devil's Hole was a natural reservoir, Cathedral Tank. Winter floods were stored there, and long after surrounding miles of quickly growing grasses had become useless as range because of the lack of drink, this tank afforded water for the H. C. cattle. Late in the spring, of course, it became scum-covered and fetid, but until the caked silt commenced to show on the boulder basin the cattle would cling there, saving the higher range for later use. Then, in other years, they would drift up toward the Hole, graze through the gap, and water in the creek, until the round-up caught and carried them into still higher country

This spring the desert tank was of far greater importance than ever before. The Hole was closed to the H. C. unless rain fell, and the days were uniformly clear; so it was wisdom to delay the round-up until the tank was emptied, then drive the cattle straight past the mouth of the Hole and start them up-country from the lower waters of Coyote Creek. Beck rode to the tank himself, and arranged his plans in accordance with the water he found.

But after Beck had been there another horseman made the ride, leaving the timber at dusk, shacking along across the waste country in a straight line for the tank. Cattle, bedded for the night about the water-hole, stirred themselves as he approached and dismounted, then stood near by and watched a strange proceeding. The man found a crevice in the rock basin, and scraped deeply into it with a clasp-knife. He wedged in five sticks of dynamite with stones, and rolled boulders over them.

He led his horse far back after lighting the fuse, but even where he stood, outside the circle of steers, rock fell. After the explosion had died into the night, he pulled at his mustache and regained his saddle rather deliberately, chuckling to himself.

The fact that a steer with a broken leg was bawling loudly, and that another, its life torn out of its side, moaned softly in helplessness, did not impress him. He rode back as he had come.

There was little time for love-making in the life of the H. C. foreman. More riders were necessary for the round-up, and he was particular about the men he hired. The country had taken sides; rather, it was either openly behind Beck or skeptical of the ability of the mistress of the outfit to remain in the country in the face of the relentless efforts of skulkers to harry her to the quitting-point. Of the skeptics Tom had his doubts. Many of them were not neutral, he knew.

But he was with Jane when he could be, although, since he had declared himself to Webb and Hepburn, he did not permit her to ride far from the ranch, even when with escort. He wanted her to witness no tragedy, and tragedy impended.

Of the motives of Webb, Hepburn, Cole, and their following he had no doubts, but there was one whose reasons were mysterious to him. He studied this during long hours, when at work, when lying sleepless on his bunk, and even when with Jane Hunter. Hilton was at Webb's, and that

was enough to brand him—but how deeply? He hesitated to enlist her aid in the solution, but when he had spent days puzzling to no result, he said to her:

"Nothing about what you have been matters with me, but there's one thing I want to ask you."

"And that?"

He eyed her a speculative moment as they sat beside her desk, the yellow light on her yellow hair.

"What was this Hilton to you?"

She colored and dropped her gaze from his, picking at a book in her lap.

"That belongs to the past," she said, "and you've just said that the past doesn't matter. I had hoped you never would want to know, because it touches a spot that isn't thoroughly healed yet. There was a time"—lifting her eyes to his—"when I had almost made up my mind to marry Dick Hilton."

He sat very quietly, and his expression did not change.

"That would have been too bad, ma'am," he said after a moment.

She nodded slowly in affirmation.

"I'd rather he wasn't in the country just now," Tom went on. "You wouldn't mind, would you, if I drove him out?"

"You trust me, don't you?" she said quickly.

He smiled gently and looked at her with a light in his eyes that was almost humble.

"I've trusted you with my love, ma'am. I want to do things for you. I'd like to drive this man out of your way."

He was reluctant to give his real reason, because, by doing so, he would necessarily make her aware of the strength of the menace of which Hilton—as he knew but could not prove—was a part.

She leaned forward, elbows on knees, hands folded.

"I wish he would go away, but I wouldn't want to see him driven. You see, there are things about me which you will never understand. Dick Hilton, for a man, was not far different from what I used to be as a woman. Our impulses were quite similar. Since I feel that I have established my right to exist by trying to do something, to be somebody, to walk alone, I've come to a realization of the thing I used to be. I pity the old Jane Hunter and all her kind. In spite of all that he has been, I pity Dick Hilton, Tom, and in that very fact I see an indication of strength of which I'm proud. His environment is to blame for what he is. Perhaps this country, the people he comes in contact with here, will do for him what they have done for me."

Beck made a mental note that this was an unconscious absurdity.

"I begrudge him nothing," she continued. "I only wish that he might come to see life as I have come to see it. If he could only see himself as he is! Why, he is intelligent, he has a good mind, he has been generous and kindly, and if he could only get set straight in his outlook I feel that I could call him my friend again. Do you understand that?"

Beck shook his head, driving back the perplexity he felt.

"No, I don't. There's lots of things I'll never quite understand about you, I expect. That's one thing that made me love you—you interest me. I just thought maybe you'd like to have him driven out of the country."

"I can never be a dog in the manger," she replied. "What is good about this life I would share with my worst enemy, and gladly, because at one time I was my own worst enemy."

"You—you don't think you'd ever want to see him again, Jane?"

With that evidence of natural jealousy was a gentle reproach, a wobegone expression, which, being so groundless in fact, set Jane Hunter laughing.

"Silly!" she cried, throwing her arms about him. "Look at me and read the answer."

Beck laughed at himself then.

"Who wouldn't want you all to himself?" he whispered. "And who wouldn't believe in you?"

Beck stood a long time under the stars that night, the feel of her lips still on his, but with an uncomfortable doubt in his heart. He was tolerant, as all big men are tolerant, but he had been bred in a hard school; he had learned to weigh men and to discard those who were found wanting. He was not vindictive, but he took no chances. Placing his trust in those who had repeatedly shown that they were unworthy of trust was taking an undue risk; and though Jane Hunter had done her best to make her reasoning carry, he could not comprehend it.

Finally he said:

"This ain't any compliment to her,

wonderin' like this. It's her way, and she sure's got a right to it!"

But he went to sleep unsatisfied.

Out at Cathedral Tank that night the cattle stood snuffing rather wonderingly. Two days before there had been water which reached their knees at the deepest place; to-day there was none. It had trickled through the scars the blast had torn in the basin. The bellies of some were a bit shrunken from lack of it, and the bodies of the steers that had been killed were bloated. One had already furnished food to a coyote and a pair of vultures.

Three or four licked the last of the damp silt and then turned eastward and began the slow trek back toward Devil's Hole, where at this season they had gone since they had been calves.

The Rev. Azariah Beal saw this scattered stringing of cattle and reported it to Beck. Tom looked up from the wheel of the chuck-wagon which he was repairing.

"They're early," he muttered. "I hadn't figured they'd leave before the end of the week. That's bad."

The next morning he and Two-Bits—the latter riding his beloved pony, with an extra horse carrying the teepee, bed, and grub—clattered down the trail into the Hole and made through the brush for the gap. They skirted the Cole ranch, eying the Mexicans who were at work clearing sage-brush, and a mile farther on halted their horses, rode forward, halted again, rode forward, stopped.

"It's McKee," Two-Bits said. "That's Webb's gray horse."

The other rider came on, and they rode forward again, Beck's holster hitched a bit forward, his thumb hooked in his belt.

Two-Bits had been right. When McKee recognized them, he averted his face as if he would ride past without speaking; but this was not to be, for Beck stopped directly in his way and said:

"Sam, if it was anybody else, I'd been shootin' long ago. I ain't got the heart to kill you. You recollect, don't you, what I told you and your crowd about driftin' into our territory?"

"This ain't your range," McKee grumbled. "This is Cole's."

His gray eyes met Beck's just once and fell off, showing helpless hate in their depths—the hate of the man who would give battle but dares not.

"No need to argue," Beck replied, tolerance replaced by a snap in his tone. "You drag it for your own range, McKee, and don't you stop to look back!"

Two-Bits was delighted at the hot flush which swept into the other's face. He loathed McKee, and to see him under the dominance of a strong man like Beck appealed to him as immensely funny.

"If my brother was here, he'd tell you about a woman that looked back an' turned to salt," he said. "But if you turn an' look back, I'll bet two bits you turn to somethin' worse."

The other flashed one look at him—a look of long-standing hate, without the utter fear that he evidenced for Beck. He rode on without a word, and Two-Bits laughed. McKee did not even look back.

At the gap there was water—just enough for a man and his horses for a few days. The seep had stopped, and the water was not fresh.

"I guess it 'll do, though," Beck said. "It's mighty important for us to keep this stock out of the Hole, Two-Bits. That's why I brought a trustworthy man. Lord, they're stringin' up fast!" He was staring out over the desert where the steers slowly ate their way to the mouth of the Hole. "Funny they're out of water so soon. If they get in here"—pointing back through the gap—"there may be hell to pay."

He helped Two-Bits pitch his teepee, and rode away.

Throughout that day the homely cowboy met the drifting steers and turned them eastward, past the Hole, toward the lower waters of Coyote Creek. They were reluctant to go, for they knew that beyond the gap lay water, but Two-Bits whooped and chased them until the van of the procession moved on in the desired direction.

He was up late at night, and awoke early in the morning, riding up the gap to turn back those that had stolen past in the night, then stationing himself in the shade of the parapet to await the others that came in increasing numbers.

Two-Bits did not see the gray horse picking its way along the heights above him. The gray's rider saw to it that he was not exposed. Nor could Beal know that the animal was picketed, and that a man crawled over the rocks on his belly, shoving a rifle before him until, from a point that screened him well, he could look down into the gap.

"BROTHER, IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOU ARE NOT INTERESTED IN THIS ARTICLE?" "YOU HEARD ME! GET OUT!" CRIED HILTON

Steers strolled up and eyed Two-Bits with ears up, lifting their noses to snuff, flinging their heads about now and then to dislodge flies that their flicking tails could not reach. He would ride out toward them, shoving them down around the shoulder of the point toward the east, and then would return to head off others that took advantage of his absence to make a steal for the gap. As he worked, he sang:

"Ho, I'm a jolly cowboy, from Texas now I hail!
Give me my quirt and po-o-ony, I'm ready for the trail;
I love the rolling prairies, they're free from care and strife.
Behind a herd of longhorns I'll journey all my life!"

His voice was unmusical, unlovely, but he sang with fervor, sang as conscientiously as he worked.

As he came and went the man above watched him, his gray eyes squinting in the glare of light, following now and then the barrel of the rifle, bringing the ivory sight to bear on the man's back, caressing the trigger with his finger. A dozen times he stiffened and held his breath and the finger twitched; but each time his body relaxed quickly and he cursed softly, rolling over on his side, impatient at his own indecision.

A continued flush was on his cheeks, and the light in his eyes was baleful, resolved, yet the lines of his mouth were weak and indecisive. Once, when Two-Bits's raucous voice reached him, he muttered aloud

and stiffened again and squeezed the stock with his trigger hand—and then went limp.

Noon came, and shadows commenced to spill into the gap from the westward. The steers that drifted up from the far reaches of wash-ribbed desert came faster, were more intent, more reluctant to be driven back. Two-Bits changed to his other horse, drank from the water-hole, and rode yipping toward a big roan steer that advanced determinedly. The animal doubled and dodged, but, shoulder against its rump, nipping viciously at the steer's back, the pony aided his rider to success and then swung back.

Two-Bits's voice floated up as he stroked his horse's neck:

"Oh, I'm a Texas cowboy, light-hearted, brave, an' free,
To roam the wide prairie is always joy to me.
My trusty little po-o-ony is my companion true;
O'er creeks an' hills an' rivers he's sure to pull me through!"

From above came a dull spat, and Two-Bits was knocked forward and down, a dull, rending pain spreading across his shoulders. He struck the ground with his face first, and instinctively his hand started back toward his holster. The first movement was a whip, then it became jerky, faltering, and when the fingers found the handle of his revolver they fumbled and could not close. He half raised himself on the other elbow, dragging his knees beneath his body slowly.

His mouth was filled with sand. His eyes—he did not know what ailed them, but he could not see. He felt dizzy and sick. He hitched himself upward another degree, striving to close his fingers on his revolver-butt. It was the only action that his groggy mind could recall. He gritted the sand between his teeth in the effort. He would draw! He would fight back! He wasn't gone—yet—wasn't—

And then he collapsed, limp and flat on the ground, as an utterly inert body lies.

The fingers twitched convulsively, then were still. A stain seeped through his vest, dark in the sun. The breath slipped through his teeth slowly. The horse stood looking at him, nose low; then stepped closer and snuffed gently; looked rather resentfully at a steer trailing through the gap unheeded, then snuffed again.

Up above a man was crawling back across the hot rocks to where a gray horse waited in the sun.

"I got him!" he muttered feverishly, as he covered the last distance at a run. "Now, by God, I'll get—"

Beal's pony stood there, switching at the flies which alighted on him. From time to time he snuffed and stamped; occasionally he peered far up the Hole or out over the desert almost hopefully, watching distant objects, with erect ears. Then the ears would droop quickly and he would chew his bit and look back at his master with helpless eyes.

Cattle strayed back and entered the Hole, those which had once been driven away passing the prone figure and the watching horse on a trot, others with their noses in the air, smelling water, heedless of all else.

The shadows crept closer and deeper about Two-Bits. Overhead a buzzard wheeled, banking sharply, coming down lazily, then flapped upward and on. It was not yet the bird's time.

The horse dozed fitfully, one hip slumped, waking now and then with a jerk, pricking his ears at the quiet figure as if he detected movement, then letting them droop again rather forlornly. Once he walked completely about his master slowly, the reins trailing, and then stopped to nose the body gently as if to say:

"What is this, my friend? I'm only a horse, and I don't understand; if I knew how to help you I would. Won't you tell me what to do? I'm waiting here just for that—to help you; but I'm only a horse."

He plucked grass aimlessly and returned to stand above the man's body, chewing abstractedly, stopping and holding his breath while he gazed down at the inanimate lump, then chewing again. Once he sighed deeply, and the saddle creaked from the strain his inhalation put on the cinch.

For hours there had been no movement. Night stole down from the east, shrouding the desert in purple, softening the harsh distances, making them seem gentle and easy. Then from the still man came a sound, like a sigh that was choked off. The hand which, hours before, had groped haltingly for the revolver, stirred ever so slightly.

The pony's ears went forward. He stepped gingerly about the body, keeping his forefeet close to it, swinging his hind parts in a big circle. He nickered softly, almost entreatingly, as if begging his master to speak, to make more movement; he

nuzzled the body rather roughly, then stamped in impatience; he sighed again and slumped a hip, chewing on his bit.

Two-Bits was wet with dew when daylight came, but he had not stirred. The sun peered into the gap, and the drops of moisture, blinking back a brief interval, seemed to draw into his clothing and skin; the rays licked up the damp that had gathered in the hoof-prints about the figure.

The black pony lifted his head high and whinnied shrilly at nothing at all. This was another day; there might be hope.

The flies lighted on the crusted stain on the vest and crawled down inside the shirt. After an eon, a sharp, white wire of consciousness commenced to glow in Two-Bits's blank mind. The one hand—the gun hand—twitched again, and the fingers, puffed from their cramped position, stretched stiffly, resuming their struggle for the gun where it had ended yesterday.

One foot moved a trifle, and a muffled cough sent a small spurt of dust from beneath the face pressed upon the ground. Slowly the gun-hand gave up its search and was still, gathering strength. The arm drew up along the man's side, the hand reached his face. The elbows pressed into the ground, and with a moan Two-Bits tried to lift his body. He tried and failed, and sank back, his face turned upward.

The pony blew loudly, shook his whole body, and stared. The other horse came up and stared, too; then moved toward the water-hole, the precious water, and drank deeply. The black pony watched him as if he, too, would drink; but he did not go; he remained there, with the reins dangling among the flies. Now and then his nostrils twitched and fluttered; his ears quirked in constant query.

Noon, and another effort to rise—a muttered word this time and a squinting of the eyes that was not wholly witless.

Two-Bits shifted his position. He could see his teepee, his black kettle on the ashes, his water bucket — his bucket — water bucket—water—

He worked his lips heavily. They were burned and cracked, and his mouth was an insensate orifice.

After a time he commenced to crawl, moving an inch at a time, and then settling back, moaning. The crusted stain on his vest took on fresh life, and the flies buzzed angrily when disturbed. His arms were of little use, and he progressed by slow undulations of his limbs. Once he found a crack between two rocks with a toe and shoved himself forward a foot.

"Damn!" he muttered in feeble triumph.

A fevered glow came into his eyes. His breath quickened under the effort. He moaned more, rested less.

And behind, beside, or before him went the excited pony. He nickered softly, as in encouragement, doing his best to put his hope into sounds. His heavy mane and forelock fell about his eyes, giving him a disheveled appearance, but he seemed to be trying to say:

"You're alive; you're alive! You *can* move after all; you *can* move! Let me help! Oh, partner, let me help you!"

The horse pawed the earth desperately, sending stones and dirt scattering, dust drifting.

"Keep on!" he seemed to say. "I'm here; we'll get there somehow!"

Two-Bits gained the shadows. The water was less than a hundred feet away. He moved his head from side to side in an agony of effort and threw one hand clumsily before him. It touched sage-brush. After moments of struggle he clamped his fingers about the stalk and dragged himself on, gritting his teeth against the pain. He reached a little wash, and tried to rise to his feet; but he could not. He floundered in effort and rolled into it, crying faintly as his torso doubled limply and he sprawled on his back.

The pony stood at the edge, snuffing, peering down. He kicked at a fly irritably and stepped down into the wash himself, nickering in tender query.

It took a long time for Two-Bits to roll over. He cried hoarsely from the hurt of the effort, and the fevered light in his eyes mounted. His mouth was no longer without sensation. It stung and smarted; so did his throat. Their hurt was worse than the weight of suffering on his shoulders. He wanted water as only a man whose life is in the balance can want water.

Somehow he crawled out of the wash. It was fifty feet to the hole now. He cut it to twenty, and lay gasping, trembling, burning, the pony close beside him, first on one side, then the other, sometimes at his feet, but never standing motionless in his path.

It was ten feet; then five. Lifting his eyelids was a world of effort in itself. His mouth was open, his breath sucked in the

dust, but he could not close his lips. He made a handbreadth and stopped. His limbs twitched spasmodically and drew up. He made a straining, strangling sound, gathering all the life that remained in his body. He rose on his elbows and on one knee. He swayed forward, he scrambled drunkenly. He pitched down, and as he went he made one last, awkward attempt to shove his own weight along; then he fell —short.

His right hand half propped his body up. It slid slowly forward, impelled by the weight upon it alone, shoving the sand in its way—then went limp and helpless. The tip of his second finger just touched the surface of the water in the pool!

The horse switched his tail slowly, as if disconsolate at a waning hope.

"Hang it all!" he might have said. "Here I thought you were going to make it and you can't. I *wish* I knew how to help!"

He sighed again, this time as if in despair. He waited a long time before drinking himself, as if hoping that his master would move. But the man's body was motionless—utterly motionless. The shallow, quick come-and-go of breath was not in evidence. Two-Bits had done all that he could do for himself.

The black pony moved to the lip of rock which held the water against the cliff. He snuffed, as if to tantalize himself, and then plunged his nose into the hollow, guzzling greedily. Great gulps ran down his long throat, little shoots of water left his lips beside the bit and fell back. He breathed and drank and made great sounds in satisfying his thirst. He lifted his head and caught his breath and let it slip out in a sigh of satisfaction, then drank again.

Finally he finished drinking and stepped back, holding his lips close, as a horse will when his mouth contains one more swallow. Then he stared at Two-Bits, moved close to him, and chewed on the bit, letting the water that he did not need spill from his mouth.

It fell squarely on the back of the man's neck, spattering on his hair, running down under his shirt, driving out the flies.

Two-Bits swam back again. It was as if some soothing balm had been spread over his wounded faculties. A flash of strength, a pleasing chill, ran through him. He moved his right arm, and the fingers slid on into the water. With a choking cry he wriggled forward and thrust his face into the pool. After a long time he drew back and let his fevered forehead soak, breathing more easily through his mouth.

It was nearly sunset when he rolled over, slowly, painfully, but not as a man on the edge of death. He looked up at the horse standing beside him. Just above him a stirrup swung to and fro in a short arc.

"After a while—a week or so—I can get hold of that—mebby," he said huskily.

XX

THE love that grew in the hearts of Tom Beck and Jane Hunter was not the only suit which approached a climax in the hills. Another existed, quite different, unknown to them—unsuspected, even; but it was not a secret to one who rode from the H. C. Ranch.

This was the Rev. Azariah Beal. He stayed on, though assuring Beck that the call might come any hour which would send him on his way. He was sent on many errands of importance, because Beck had come to believe that he could trust the clergyman as he could trust no other man, and it was this riding which gave Beal his knowledge of that other love-making.

Day after day he saw Dick Hilton in Devil's Hole. He saw him joined by another rider—by Bobby Cole; and knew that the Easterner spent many days at the ranch-house down there in the deep valley.

Hilton treated the girl as she never had been treated before. He told her tales of cities and men and women that held her breathless, and he wooed her with an artfulness which kept her unaware of love-making. When with him, as when with her father, that ready defiance, her expectation of trouble, became reduced to a wistfulness, an eager inquisitiveness, which left her, not the self-sufficient bundle of passionate strength that she had seemed, but a simple mountain child.

He would ride beside her, or sit at night by the fire in her father's cabin, and would talk for hours, giving of his experience well, for he was a glib talker. He asked nothing in return—openly; but while he talked his eyes were on her eyes, piercing their depths, on her red mouth, hungering, on her wonderful throat, fired by desire. He bided his time, for the prize was a choice one.

Now and then she talked to him of Jane Hunter, and though her allusions were

scornful, and her face assumed an expression of hostility, he knew that this only resulted from her envy, the curiosity which she would not let come into being. He played upon this, dropping hints of the reason for his coming West, lying insinuations of his relations with the mistress of the big ranch, each hint a fertile seed planted in the rich soil of her imagination.

One afternoon they dismounted in a clump of willows where, early in the season, and in wet summers, a spring bubbled under a rim rock. Now it was dry, almost dust-dry in places, and the girl sat on the grass, with Hilton stretched at her feet.

He talked to her for a long time. When he paused she said, looking far away:

"I'd like to see somethin' else besides this. I'd like to have some of the chances other gals have. I'd give anything for a chance to be somebody!"

He threw away the cigarette he was smoking.

"I'd give anything to give you a chance, Bobby," he said.

"Yes, but you can't!" she laughed hopelessly. "You're a gentleman, an' I—why, I'm just the daughter of a nester."

"And maybe that very combination of circumstances gives me my chance to give you yours. I should like very much to take you East, Bobby."

"Yes, but there's Alf. I couldn't leave him"—shaking her head, still innocent of his intent.

Hilton was not unprepared.

"But if he had a comfortable ranch, with good buildings and plenty of stock, and could come to visit you at times?"

"But he ain't got any of them, an' besides—you don't mean for me to *stay?*" she said suddenly, her eyes incredulous.

"To stay, Bobby—to stay with me, forever and ever."

She started to laugh, but checked herself, and leaned suddenly toward him, her lips parted. He lifted himself to an elbow and reached out for her hand.

"Don't you understand, dear girl? Don't you see that I love you?"

She withdrew her hand from his clasp, and looked away, her brows slightly drawn toward each other. He watched her craftily, timing his urging to her realization.

"Don't you see that I came West guided by something bigger than my own reason, by something that regulates the loves of men to bring them to a good end?"

She looked back at him and shook her head slowly.

"I never thought I'd be loved. I never thought you cared for me thataway."

"Bless you! That night when I went walking into your cabin, and you met me with a rifle ready, I knew that I would love you, and that you would love me. It's one of the things neither of us can explain, but I was sure of it, sure of it. Didn't you guess? Didn't you feel it deep down in your heart?"

"No, never. Nothin' good had ever happened to me. I didn't calculate anything good ever would happen. The only bein' I ever thought I'd love was Alf, an' I'd go through fire for him. But this—it's different. It ain't like that. This is somethin'—I don't know—"

She rose and pressed her hands to her breast, as if some bursting emotion hurt her. Hilton stood before her, his breath a trifle quick, his lips parted greedily. His hour, he felt, had struck!

"One of the reasons that made me love you was your devotion to your father. Another was your distrust. You never did trust me at first. I felt that you were keeping me off, holding yourself away from me, Bobby. I wanted to tell you all this long ago"—which was the truth—"but I wanted you to be sure of yourself; I wanted you to recognize love and to know that this thing between us is the lasting sort"—which was a lie.

"The lasting kind?" she queried. "You love me—for good? Honest?"

"Honest!" he promised, taking both her hands. "I love you with all the love a man can give a woman. I love you enough to devote my whole life to making you happy. I have money. We can go where we please, do what we please. You will have friends and respect. You can see cities and the ocean. You can live in grand hotels and eat wonderful food that some one else has cooked; you can hear music and go to theaters; you will have flowers and automobiles; you'll see California and Florida and Europe."

"Because you love me?" she demanded, as he put his arms about her. "It's because you love me, ain't it? If I thought—if I thought it was for anything else, I'd kill you!"

Her tone was even enough, her voice the soft, full voice of a woman touched by love, but beneath its velvet was a matter-of-fact

certainty that caused the faintest tremor to run through Hilton's limbs.

They looked into each other's eyes, felt each other's breath upon their cheeks, the one consumed by passion, the other swept upward into a new world, a new, incredible life, as a beautiful hope touched her heart. They did not see their horses standing with intent ears; nor did they hear the slight sounds of another approaching.

"Because I love you, Bobby! Will you come?"

"An' I'll be your wife, an' you won't be ashamed of me—ever?"

"Never!" in a tone that was too firm for conviction.

"An' Alf 'll come to see us whenever he wants to?"

"Whenever he wants to. Don't you believe me? Why question?" he asked hurriedly. "Say you love me, now, to-day, this hour"—straining her to him. "Say it to me, Bobby; say that you love me as I love you!"

"EXCUSE ME," THE CLERGYMAN SAID MILDLY, "BUT THE GENTLEMAN'S HORSE IS FED"

His eyes burned into hers, and he closed his lips to press them on hers, to touch the woman of her into being, to accomplish the end he sought.

"Oh, Mr. Hilton, I—"

Her voice had the quality of a sob, and

he waited for her to go on before he sealed his tricky pact with a kiss; but as she hesitated, a crashing of the brush shocked him into a realization of the outside world, and a resounding voice cried:

"One moment! Just one moment!"

The Rev. Azariah Beal advanced toward them through the willows. Bobby whirled to face him, and Hilton, with an oath, released her.

For a moment, portentous silence. The Rev. Azariah halted, plainly confused. Before Hilton's glare and the girl's breathless fury his eyes wavered. He opened his lips to speak and closed them helplessly. Then a queer glimmer crossed his face, half hope, half smile.

He reached into his pocket, brought forth a fountain pen, held it up, and said:

"One moment of your time to bring to your attention this article, known from coast to coast, indispensable to any man, woman, or child, which we are introducing for the purposes of further advertising at a trifling price, which—"

"Who the devil sent you here?" demanded Hilton, advancing.

The Rev. Azariah lowered his head and blinked through his spectacles.

"I do not come from that black deity," he replied mildly. "I am directed from above, and I have been called upon—"

"Just now you're called upon to get out of here!" the exasperated Hilton hotly returned. "Do you understand what I say? Get out of here, if you know what's good for you!"

"Brother, is it possible that you are not interested in this article? Made of pure rubber—"

"You heard me! Go!" cried Hilton.

For a moment the Rev. Azariah stood as if undecided.

"I am sorry," he said, "that I cannot interest you. If not to-day, then another

"HE'S STANDING THERE NOW, COVERING ME WITH A GUN!" HILTON SAID. "LOOK AT HIM!"

time, perhaps? A splendid gift for a lady, my friend, a—"

"Nobody here wants to listen to you. Be on your way!"

Sorrowfully Mr. Beal replaced the pen in his pocket, rattling it against the remainder of his stock. As he turned away he drew them all out, and for some time he stood beside his horse, counting them carefully, muttering to himself. He looked about his feet, retraced his steps to where he had stood in his attempt to make a sale, scanning the ground.

"Can it be," he asked absently, "that I have miscounted?"

He gave no heed to the two who watched him, but it was a matter of ten minutes before he was finally satisfied that there had been no loss — or that nothing else would be lost that day—and rode away.

By that time Hilton's ill temper was fierce, and in Bobby's face there was a half-frightened, bewildered look. She turned to the Easterner with a questioning little gesture, but he did not respond.

"He spoiled it for a while, Bobby," he said. "Let's ride back."

XXI

Webb was building biscuits, and Hepburn was slicing a steak from the hind quarter of a carcass which a few days before had been an H. C. steer. McKee entered with an armful of wood. He dropped it into the box beside the stove with a clatter and went out again. He was whistling a doleful little tune, as a preoccupied man will whistle. His gray eyes were peculiarly grim, and when he stopped whistling his mouth set into determined lines.

"What's got into him?" Webb asked.

The other shrugged his shoulders.

"He's changed in the last day or two. Wouldn't think he was the same man," Webb went on. "Do you think there's a chance—"

It was unnecessary to finish the question, for there was only one subject that these men discussed which called for the cautious tone Webb had adopted. Hepburn chuckled scornfully.

"Thunder, no!" he said. "Sam's the last one to double-cross us, especially when Beck's on th' other side.

"Somethin's got into him, all right, but it ain't anything to hurt us. He's changed. You know how he used to be, Dad—kind of a bully, always lookin' for trouble. Well, it wasn't that he was quarrelsome, like most mean men are. It was because he was afraid to be any other way. That was what made him abuse his horse that time; the pony had put a crimp in Sam, an' the only way Sam could work up his nerve to get aboard was to work him over unmerciful. That give Beck his chance, an' he sure did comb poor Sam. It took all the starch out of him, but that wasn't the worst. It give everybody that didn't like him a chance to rub it in, an' they sure done it. Sam's been a standin' joke ever since. They seem to look for chances to ride him. Two-Bits ain't let him alone a minute when they was near together. Sam used to swear he'd get both Two-Bits an' Beck, but he won't. He ain't that kind, I guess. Beck knocked what little sand he had left all out of him. Somethin's changed him again, though."

"You've rubbed it into him pretty strong yourself, Webb," Hepburn reminded his friend.

"Different reason." Webb waxed philosophical. "When a man's enemies bother him it only drives him down—that is, a man like Sam; but when his friends ride him, it's likely to put a little color in his liver. That's why I keep after him. I never did figure he'd try to get Beck in an open fight, but I used to think he might do it some other way. That's what I'd like to see him do!"

"Maybe he will. Somethin's changed him again, Webb. I tell you he's been goin' around to-day like a man whose done somethin' big. It's a sort of—of confidence, you'd call it."

"Mebby Hilton's got under his skin. He don't like Sam, but he talks a lot to him about Beck, quiet like, as if it wasn't of much importance. Still, he keeps dingin' away at it."

"Like he does to us about things, eh? Always sort of suggestin', until you go an' do somethin' that seems like a good play, an' then, after a while, you wake up to realize that he was the one who started you on your way."

Hilton came in, and the four—the other riders were on the range—ate their meal and talked lowly of the war they were waging. That is, Hepburn and Webb talked. McKee listened; neither of the others bothered to address him, or even

consciously to include him as an auditor. And Hilton listened and watched McKee, his eyes speculative.

"With the tank gone, that cuts down just so much on their range," Webb said. "It's plain they don't figure on usin' the Hole, or they'd let their stuff drift in there, as they've always done."

"You don't want to be too sure that their stuff won't get into the Hole," put in McKee, with a nodding of his head.

"I s'pose they put a man in the gap to go to sleep, did they?" Webb returned. "It was a good move on Beck's part. I wish the stuff would get by and perish of thirst! We'd keep 'em out of Cole's water, you bet! Beck's too wise to let that happen, though."

"Mebby he ain't so wise as he thinks," McKee insisted in that queer, lofty manner. "He put a man there all right, all right, but everybody ain't been asleep."

Hepburn started to say something to Webb, but was arrested by this.

"What you got in your head, Sam?" he asked, with more intent than he had used in questioning McKee in months.

Sam felt himself assuming a sudden importance at this. His manner of mystery had caught their interest. It was the first time he had succeeded in doing this, the first time he had really been an insider in the game they were playing. It was gratifying to know facts which they did not know, and he cherished this superiority.

"Never you mind what's in Sam's head," he said. "You've been figurin' I'm a helpless sort of waddie for a long time, but I guess you'll think different when you find out some things I know."

Hepburn urged again, but McKee was no more responsive, so the older man put McKee's secretiveness down as pique, concealing nothing of value, and went on with the talk.

Later in the evening Webb said:

"Sure you didn't leave anything by the tank that 'd give us away?"

"Think I'm simple-minded?" Hepburn countered.

"It's a blamed good thing not to be. That's the first place they'll ride when the round-up starts. As soon as Beck hears the tank's gone he'll go over that place with a fine-tooth comb. If he could hang that on us, it 'd be all he'd need."

"He can go over it with a microscope, but he'll find nothin'."

"You sure he will?" McKee asked, rather breathlessly, his eyes lighted with a peculiar glow.

"Will what?"

"Go there to look it over."

Hepburn snorted.

"That's one thing you can be sure about Beck—he watches details an' don't let nothin' get away from him. He's always pryin' into things himself; he ain't satisfied to get his information second hand. A thing like this, which has meant a lot to them—why, he'll investigate it until he's found somethin' or hell freezes!"

McKee sat back, staring at the floor, his hands limp in his lap. Still that strange light showed in his eyes, and occasionally his lips moved as if he rehearsed a declaration to himself. Hilton, stretched on his bed, watched McKee.

After a time Sam roused and rolled a cigarette with unsteady fingers. He sat smoking as he thought and planned, already triumphing in anticipation. His eyes changed, and the lines of his face were remolded—and Hilton still watched.

Late that evening McKee went out into the dooryard, to be alone with the memory of the stroke he had made, and to continue his plans for the master-blow he was to make. But he was not alone. Hilton followed and spoke quietly over his shoulder, saying:

"Yes, Sam, the chances are that he'll go to the tank alone."

Whereupon the other started and whispered savagely:

"How'd you know I was thinkin' *that?*"

Hilton laughed quietly and put an arm across Sam's shoulders, and they walked at length in the darkness, talking, talking. The Easterner looked close into McKee's face, and flattered and suggested and encouraged him.

XXII

THE chuck-wagon had gone, followed by the bed-wagon and the cavet, the last made up of one hundred and forty saddle-horses, stringing along the road, a solid column of horse-flesh. In a day the round-up would be on. Camp was to be made first far down on Coyote Creek, and the country from Cathedral Tank eastward would first be ridden.

Outwardly the departure was not so different from others of its sort. There were rifles on saddles, to be sure, but there was

plenty of banter and fun. Still, a spirit prevailed which told that the men were not wholly concerned with the normal business of the range. There were other things, more grim, more serious, than gathering steers and branding calves.

H. C. hands were not the only ones who rode heavily armed. There were others, skulking on high ridges, watching, waiting. The whole country knew they were there. The eyes of the whole country were on the factions. The ears of the country were strained to catch what sounds of clash might rise. For the coming of that clash was sensed as an impending crash of thunder is sensed under cloud-banked skies.

"I'll be joinin' them to-night or in the morning," Beck told Jane as the cavalcade disappeared down the creek. "I'm glad there are things to hold me here a few hours longer, because I'll be gone a long time, an' I'm jealous of the days I have to be away from you."

"You'll come to say good-by?"

"If I have to crawl to you!" He gave her one of his lingering kisses. "When I come back from the ride there's something I'd like to talk over with you—something we ain't mentioned yet."

"I'll be waiting to talk it over, dear," she whispered, for she understood.

Not long after Beck had ridden away, the Rev. Azariah stumped down from the corral to the ranch-house and rapped on the door. Jane was at her desk, and looked up in surprise, for it was the first time the elder Beal had come to her alone.

"I come to ask for aid, ma'am, in what might be termed work among the heathen, though in a sense it is the task of a home missionary."

Jane put down her pen and sat back in her chair, trying to hide her amusement.

"Yes, reverend," she said in her crisp manner. "I'm interested."

He blinked and rattled pens in a side pocket of the rusty coat.

"I trust that you will bear with me, ma'am, until I have finished. I have been moved to speak to you for long, but have hesitated because it is difficult to present the matter without intruding on privacies. An unholy love is being hidden in the solitudes of these hills. A man who is at heart a serpent seeks to corrupt the white soul of a child. You possess the knowledge of this man which seems to be the only hope of salvation for the innocent."

A feeling of apprehension swept through the girl. With it was suspicion, for though her mind easily fastened on Dick Hilton as the man referred to, she could connect him with no other woman.

"I trust, ma'am, that you will be charitable in your estimate of what I have done. It is no more possible for Azariah Beal to go through life with his eyes closed, and his powers of deduction dormant, than it is for the birds to refrain from flight or the fishes from swimming. I try to do good as I go my way. I realize that it is not in the orthodox manner, that my methods are strange; but my work is among unusual people, and the old ways of accomplishment will not produce results, any more than the old standards of morality will fit the lives of my people. I observed this man, a stranger to the country, in town on my arrival. When I reached here to tarry with my brother until I am called to move, I observed you, also a stranger to the frontier. I observed other things which you will not consider prying curiosity, I hope. There was a connection, a logical connection, between you two strangers; were it not for subsequent events this observation would have remained in my heart. So far it has, but now I must reveal it to you. You are the only individual who stands between Dick Hilton and the ruin of Bobby Cole."

He stopped talking and rattled his pens again. Jane's apprehension was swept away, and she was consumed with a sharp feeling of abhorrence.

"You mean that he—" she began, and let the question trail off.

The Rev. Azariah nodded.

"Exactly. He has charmed her. He speaks with the cunning of a serpent, and under his influence she is as helpless as a quail. He cannot be driven off by threats, because he is not that sort. The girl cannot be convinced of his wicked purpose, because she trusts no man but him. If the affair proceeds, she will pay the price of a broken heart, because in spirit she is pure gold. He might protest his sincerity to men of this country, and force them into belief, but with you it is different. There is in every man, no matter how far he may have fallen, a sense of shame. He can bury it deeply from those who do not know him, but to his own kind it is ever near the surface. I beg of you, ma'am, to join me in this holy cause and dissuade him from his

black purpose, if not by an appeal to honor, then by an appeal to his shame."

Jane rose.

"You mean that he has been making love to this girl? And that you think I can save her?"

"It's the only way. She will not listen to me, she will not listen to you, because she considers you her enemy. He may be so far sunk in sin that he will not heed the advice of one whom he has known and respected and—excuse me—loved, after his manner of loving." Jane flushed, but he took no notice. "But unless I attempt to bring your influence to bear upon him, I will feel that I have not answered the call to duty."

He blinked again and looked at her with an appeal that wiped out any doubt she might have had; he was wholly sincere.

"Why, I don't know what I could say, what I could do."

"Nor I. But you know Hilton; you know the girl; I have made you familiar with the situation. I rely on your resourcefulness. May I bring him to you?"

"He wouldn't come here."

The Rev. Azariah rattled his pens and said:

"I think I might persuade him. Have I, as your employee, your permission—I might say, your *order*—to bring him here?"

"Of course. If there is anything I can do—ugh!" She shuddered and pressed a wrist against her eyes. "It's beastly! Beastly!"

The Rev. Azariah departed. Throughout the day Jane Hunter could think of little other than the situation which he had outlined to her. Her wrath was roused, replacing the disgust she had felt at first, and her heart went out to Bobby Cole with a tenderness that only women can know for women.

She tried to think ahead, to consider what she could say or do, to speculate what the results of this next meeting with Dick Hilton might be. But she could not guess; and that was well, for could she have foreseen, could she have known all that impended, her courage might have failed.

Evening was well into dusk, with the first stars pricking through the failing daylight, when two riders came through the H. C. gate. Dick Hilton rode first, and behind him, one hand in a deep pocket of his frock coat, rode the Rev. Azariah.

"You can get down and open the gate," the latter said, and Hilton, sulkily dismounting, led his horse through.

"And now what?" he asked in surly submission.

"Now I'll finish my errand and escort you to the owner of this establishment."

Hilton led his horse across to the dooryard. The Rev. Azariah dismounted, and the two walked down the cottonwoods to the big veranda, the Easterner still in the lead, the other with his hand in his side pocket.

Jane saw them; she was at the door.

"Good evening!" said Hilton bitterly.

"In accordance with your orders, ma'am, I persuaded this gentleman to call," said Beal, almost humbly. "I'll feed his horse and return later."

He turned and hurried up the path.

Hilton pulled down his coat-sleeves irritably, and looked at Jane with a bitter smile.

"To what do I owe the—the honor of such a summons?"

"Come in, Dick. I want to talk to you," she replied, keeping her voice and expression steady.

She held the door open, and he entered, his mouth drawn down in a sardonic grimace. A single shaded lamp was lighted, and as she turned to him she could see his eyes glittering balefully in the dusk.

"Rather different from our last meeting here," he said testily. "Then you were concerned with my going; now you seem determined to have me here."

"Let's not discuss the past, Dick. I called you here for a definite purpose. Can you guess what it is?"

He eyed her in hostile speculation.

"I don't see where anything that concerns me could concern you now. That is, unless you've changed your mind."

She gave him a wry smile and a shake of her head.

"I shall never change, Dick. It was no interest in you that made me send for you. It was interest in the well-being of another woman."

"Oh, another woman! And who, pray, may she be?" frigidly, face darkening.

"Can't you guess? Have there been so many out here?"

"You know there's only one woman for me," he said bitterly. "She drove me off like a thief, and has called me back as if I were a thief!"

"Perhaps you are."

"What do you mean by that?"

There was that about him which made her think of a man cornered.

"I have called you here because I have reason to believe that you are trying to steal the heart of a young girl—of Bobby Cole."

He laughed unpleasantly, but there was in the laugh a queer relief, as if he had anticipated other things.

"Now who's been tattling to you?"

"My men have seen you come and go, they have seen you with the girl. One of them came to me and begged that I would send for you and try to talk you out of this. They know, Dick. These men understand men like you."

"Because they see me with her, and because I'm not considered fit by you to stay beneath your roof, even when it is night and storming, they think I'm damned beyond hope, do they? They think I'm menacing her happiness, do they?"

"But aren't you?" she countered. "I know her. I have talked to her and watched her. Dick, she is a lonely, pathetic little creature with the world against her. There have been just two things left in her life—her own splendid self-respect and her devotion to her father. And now she is facing loss of the biggest thing she possesses—the loss of her belief in herself, for you will destroy that just as surely as you force her to listen to your—to what I suppose you still call your love-making."

He eyed her a moment before saying:

"You used, at least, to be fair, Jane; you used to go slowly in judging people and their motives, and usually you were more or less right. Have you put all that behind you? Does the fact that a man is charged with some irregularity convince you of his guilt?"

"No; but knowing you and knowing her—"

"Don't you think it possible for a man—even, for the sake of the argument, a blackguard like me"—bowing slightly—"to change a little?"

He put the question with so much confidence, with so much of his old certainty, that it checked Jane.

"We all may change," she said slowly.

"I am glad you will grant that much," he went on ironically. "Think back, just a few weeks, and you may recall one somewhat theatrical statement you made to me about finding yourself among these people. I thought it preposterous then, but I have lived and learned; I know now that you might mean what you said then. Jane, I, too, have found my people—at least, my woman."

She stared hard at him.

"Do you mean that, Dick Hilton?" she inquired in a low tone.

"As much as I have ever meant anything in my life!"

"Sit down," she said, more to give her time to think than in consideration of his comfort. "It isn't much of a boast, to mean this as much as you have ever meant anything," she added after a moment.

"Then need we talk further? You ask questions; I answer; you do not believe. Why continue?"

She sat down in a chair before him.

"This is the reason—I think you have lied to me again. I don't believe you are sincere. No, no, you must listen to me, now!" as he started forward with an enraged exclamation. "I brought you here to make what is left of the Dick Hilton I once liked see this thing as I see it."

And try she did. She talked rapidly, almost hurriedly, carried along by her own conviction, sweeping aside his early protests, forcing him to listen to her. She put her best into that effort, for as he sat there with his cruel, cynical smile, she realized that this was a task worthy of her best mettle.

She sketched Bobby Cole's life as she knew it. She argued in detail to show him how the girl had never had a chance to taste the things which are sweetest to girlhood. She touched on the incident in town, where, in desperation, Bobby had tried to force the respect of men. She told him of the defiance with which her own advances of friendship had been met.

Jane was eloquent. For the better part of an hour she talked steadily, occasionally interrupted by a skeptical laugh or a sneering retort, but she persisted. Hilton listened and watched, his eyes hard, his mouth drawn into forbidding lines, a manner of suspicious caution about him, as if there was much that he wanted to conceal.

Finally her sincerity had an effect, and she could see his cold assurance melting. His gaze left hers, and a flush crept into his cheeks. She moved quickly to sit beside him.

"Dick! Dick! For the sake of what you once were, for the sake of what you

still can be, go away! If you won't go for the sake of the girl, go for your own!"

"It's not what you think," he protested feebly, without looking at her. "I'm not philandering."

"No, Dick, not philandering, because that is too gentle a word. It is something worse, something darker, which will bring more shame to you and to all who once knew and trusted you. Don't you see that you're playing with something as delicate as a mountain flower? Don't you see that you will crush it? Because this girl is strong of body and able to contend for her own position, don't think that her heart can be treated roughly. It has never come into the light. It would wither if she gave it to you and found that you had deserted it."

"I tell you I'm on the level with her."

"WHAT IS IT, BROTHER?" AZARIAH ASKED GENTLY. "FROM BEHIND," TWO-BITS SAID WEAKLY. "THEY GOT ME FROM BEHIND"

"Would you marry her?" Jane inquired, leaning closer to him as his manner told of the effect her pleas were having.

"Of course."

"You'd take her to the East, to your friends?"

"Why not?" shifting uneasily.

"Dick, look at me!" Tears in her eyes, she put her hands on his shoulders and forced him to turn his face. "You can't mean that. I can see you don't. Dick, oh, Dick! For the sake of all that is good and fine in life, for the sake of the manhood you can regain, don't do this thing! I'm asking it of you. Perhaps I have little right to make any requests of you, but in the name of the love you say you once bore for me, try to look into my heart, a woman's heart, and see what this thing means. I'm not trying to make it difficult for you; I'm not trying to interfere and be mean. I'm begging you, Dick, to give her up. If nothing else will appeal to you, do it for my sake!"

She shook him gently as he turned his head from her, humiliated, shamed, beaten. He was convinced; she knew that his sham was broken down, that his purpose was clear to her, and that the conscience remaining in his soul tortured him.

Jane held so a long moment, her fingers gripping his shoulders, appeal in every tense line of her body.

And close outside the window another figure held tense, watching, straining in a futile attempt to catch the low words they spoke. It was a slender figure, which rode up on a soft-stepping horse, dismounted, slipped over the fence, ran stealthily along the creek, halted in the shadow of the cottonwoods, and then crept slowly forward until it stood close to the shaft of yellow light which streamed from the window. There it stood spying.

"You have said that you loved me. Dick. Do this for me in the name of that love! I am asking it with a sincerity that was never in any other request I have made of you."

Slowly he turned his face to hers, showing an expression of weakness, of helplessness, as one who turns to ask humbly, almost desperately, for aid.

The figure out there started forward as if it would leap through the window, making a sharp sound of breath hissing through teeth, in fright or in hatred. The movement was checked, for the gate creaked open and the scuffing boots of a man were heard on the path. The figure skulked swiftly along the house, ducking along the cottonwoods, out toward the road, where a horse stood waiting.

It was the Rev. Azariah coming. As he neared the house, he whistled "Yield Not to Temptation," as if to give warning of his approach. Hilton heard and looked up sharply, and a glitter of rage appeared in his eyes. He shook Jane Hunter off savagely and rose.

"I'd let you make an ass of me!" he cried savagely. "You won't believe when I tell you the truth—but what should I care?" he broke off shortly. "Whatever I do, and where, and why, is my own affair; none of yours, though you try to make it yours, try to judge me as you judge your new friends, probably. You talk of the man I once was. Well, if I've changed in your eyes, it's not my fault; it's yours, Jane Hunter, yours! You'd drive me on, lead me on, and when finally cornered you'd be perfectly frank to tell me that you'd only toyed with me; that you tolerated me because you thought you might have to use the things I owned!"

"Not that, Dick! You're putting it all wrong—"

"Listen to me!" he shouted, quivering with rage. "If I've changed, it is you who have changed me! If life means nothing to me, it is you who have made it so!" He was towering in his anger. "You played me as your last straw as long as you dared, and now, when I go my way, the only way open to me, when I try to find a little happiness, you hound me, try to shame me with your sham morals!"

"Dick, that's not true."

"It is true. Why, you haven't a leg to stand on—"

His storming was interrupted by a rap on the door, and he turned to see the Rev. Azariah standing there, a battered derby in his hand.

"Excuse me," the clergyman said mildly, "but the gentleman's horse is fed."

It was his way of letting Jane Hunter—and Dick Hilton—know that she was not alone; but if he had intended to stop the tirade which he had heard from outside he did not succeed, for the Easterner was further enraged at sight of him.

"I suppose this is part of your plan!" he snapped. "You found out that it's no use to wheedle me, so you've had your gunman come to drive me off!"

"Dick, don't be silly! You're absurd. A gun—the idea!"

Hilton laughed tauntingly.

"He's standing there now, covering me with a gun!" he said. "Look at him!"

He pointed to the Rev. Azariah's pocket. A hand was in it, the garment bulged sharply, and imagination could easily see within a revolver, ready for instant use. "That's how you treat me; that's how you got me here. God knows I wouldn't have come otherwise if your existence depended on it. This man met me on the trail. He said you wanted to see me. I consigned him to the place from which he tries to save sinners. He covered me just as he has me covered now, and said it would be wise for me to answer your summons. How else do you think he brought me?" he demanded, wheeling to face Jane again.

The girl looked quickly to Beal, her lips parted in surprise.

"I sent Mr. Beal for you, yes, but I said nothing about using force to bring you. I wouldn't do that. I'm sure there is some mistake!"

"Yes, ma'am, I'm sure there is," said the Rev. Azariah, blinking and withdrawing his hand slowly. "I'm a man of peace. I'm not a man of force."

He lifted his hand clear. The ominous bulge in his pocket collapsed, and he held up one of his pens.

"One dollar," he said rather weakly, as if either frightened or vastly amused.

Standing there, looking rather blankly about, holding the pen in his hand, he was in ludicrous contrast to the angry Hilton. It made the other man seem absurd, his raging like the burlesque of some clowning actor.

With a helpless, choking oath, Hilton turned and strode for the doorway.

"For the last time I've been made a fool of!" he cried, and hastened up the path.

They heard him mount his horse and ride away.

Jane was too busied with more somber thoughts to appreciate the humor of the situation; she did so later. Even had she been able to give attention to the contrast between Hilton's rage and the chagrin which followed so closely, the change in the Rev. Azariah would have diverted her attention. He stood looking at her with grief in his eyes, and when he spoke his voice shook.

"I feel that I have done my duty, ma'am, but that is all Azariah Beal has to say for himself. There has been no result. I may have been too late in my attempt. I fear there is nothing more to be done, unless you succeed in ridding yourself of your enemies."

"Do you think that would have an effect on Bobby Cole?"

He nodded gravely.

"You and she have something in common—an enemy."

"You mean that Hilton is my enemy in the sense that he may imperil the future of the H. C.?"

"The same, ma'am."

She studied him carefully.

"Reverend, it is likely that you are right. I am beginning to see a connection between factors which have seemed to be unrelated."

He started to speak, but a shout checked him. They listened to a confusion of voices.

"Something's wrong," Beal said, and stepped to the veranda. "Somebody's hurt!"

Jane ran to the doorway, but he had already started up the path. She followed as she saw a close huddle of men about the lighted doorway of the bunk-house move slowly in, carrying a burden gently. As she neared the building, a rather tragic quiet marked the group.

Two-Bits's horse was standing, saddled, in the path of light. Inside a man was lying face down on the floor. A cowboy knelt at his head, and two or three others stood beside him, silent and grave.

The prostrate man was Two-Bits, and his shoulders dripped blood. As Jane became a part of the group, he stirred and struggled to raise his head.

"What is it, brother?" Azariah Beal asked gently, turning Two-Bits over and supporting his head. "Tell us. You're not done for. It's ripped your back open, but that's all. Who was it?"

The other looked about slowly with bewildered eyes.

"From behind," he said weakly. "They got me from behind."

His gaze wavered from face to face, and finally rested on Jane's. He moved feebly.

"A big bunch of your cattle must be in the Hole, ma'am," he said. "There ain't —any water there. I was keepin' 'em out, an' somebody got me from behind. They must 'a' waited—to get me—from behind. The only water's—in fence. It looks like —a lot of trouble, ma'am."

He stopped talking, exhausted.

(*To be continued in the February number of* MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE)

ESTELLE WINWOOD, LEADING WOMAN IN SOMERSET MAUGHAM'S COMEDY OF POSTWAR COMPLICATIONS, "TOO MANY HUSBANDS"

From her latest photograph by White, New York

UNDER the title "Critic-Pressure" the London *Stage* recently printed an editorial on the difficulties encountered by reviewers in giving adequate attention to new plays in the short time at their disposal. In the West End theaters, just as on Broadway, curtains have taken to rising later and later, with the result that sometimes they do not fall on the last act until half past eleven—which necessitates quick work on the part of the critics, if their reviews are to appear in the next morning's newspapers. Under these circumstances it is small wonder that plays get less space than their managers think they deserve.

One remedy would be to offer all new plays on Saturday night, when, according to the regular custom of the newspapers, which must necessarily close their forms for Sunday much earlier than on other nights, the notices are held over until Monday morning, thus giving the writers a whole day in which to prepare them. If the result George Tyler achieved with "Clarence"—brought out on the last night in the week—be any criterion, Saturday would be quite likely to displace Monday as the favorite night for *premières,* although its universal adoption would play hob with booking arrangements. In the *Tribune,* Heywood Broun wrote more than a column of "Clarence" eulogy, even taking the time to eat his own words, set down the week before, to the effect that Tarkington would never write half so well for the stage as for the printed page. And Lawrence Reamer, in the *Sun,* took nearly a column in which to tell how much he thought of the new piece.

To be sure, Saturday night openings do not always insure favorable notices. Indeed, I call to mind one or two cases in which the advertisements on Sunday asked the readers to watch the Monday papers for what the critics said, when, had the managers but realized what the verdict

would be, they would not have been so eager to call attention to it.

Perhaps the best and simplest remedy would be to start plays earlier. I know a man who claims that it is impossible to be late to a New York show, and more than once I have heard a theaterful of impatient auditors break into applause simply to manifest their dissatisfaction at the delay in ringing up. London has sought a middle ground in the matter by starting first nights promptly at eight o'clock, to accommodate the reviewers, and beginning at the so-called fashionable hour on subsequent evenings.

Apropos of the fashionables, I have noted at musical shows that the smarter the audiences, the more addicted they are to walking out on the performers while they are singing the final ensemble. It has been suggested that their premature exit is due to eagerness to get in some dancing of their own at the Ziegfeld Frolic or the Midnight Whirl. These after-the-theater entertainments, with the intimate touches between the performers and those occupying front-row tables—in the latest Frolic the girls extract tiny flasks from the Woman's First National Bank, and offer a drop or two of the real thing to ringside visitors—are not possible in London, where the twelve-thirty closing law for everything outside of clubs is rigidly enforced.

Other American importations have been so numerous in the British capital during the past two seasons that complaints are frequently heard of the encroachments on native wares. For instance, in this same London *Stage* I discover that out of thirty-two attractions playing at West End theaters, nine have already been seen in New York. Taking the count in Manhattan, on the other hand, in Broadway's forty-five theaters all but six offerings were plays made in the U. S. A.—a gratifying showing, indeed, com-

ELSIE JANIS, WHO IS BACK FROM THE FRONT WITH HER GANG IN A BOMB-PROOF REVUE

From her latest photograph by F. W. C. Pohle, Buffalo

DOROTHY MORTIMER, WHO IS THE JEALOUS WIFE IN THE FARCE HIT, "NIGHTIE NIGHT"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

pared with the conditions that prevailed in yesteryears.

You may recall that in the interview with George Tyler printed in the October MUNSEY, I asked to which of the several plays he expected to produce this season he pinned the most faith.

"To 'A Young Man's Fancy,'" was his instant reply; and when I repeated my question after the knock-out hit achieved by "Clarence," he persisted in clinging to this same "Fancy."

We now have the sober facts of the outcome. The piece was voted by some to be swamped by its scenery, by others to be deadly dull, while the indifference of the public proved so pronounced that it was withdrawn after ten nights. Happily, Mr. Tyler stands to make so much on "Clarence" that he can well afford to smile—as I have seen him do—over the untimely tucking away of his pet "Fancy," which concerned itself with the love of a young man for a wax figure in a department-store window. It needed a Barrie to do justice to a whimsy of this sort. The Philadelphia writer of detective stories, whose work it was, went at his task with too heavy a hand.

The third Tyler offering to reach Broadway was "On the Hiring Line," a satirical comedy which is of rare timeliness in these servantless days. A commuter, unable to get servants, induces a detective agency to send two of its operators in the guise of a cook and butler. Their eagerness to earn their pay results in trouble galore for their employer, who is made to believe that his wife is receiving love-letters from an actor, and that his daughter is about to elope with a crook disguised as a chauffeur.

It was with a certain shock that I found

MARJORIE RAMBEAU, STARRING IN "THE UNKNOWN WOMAN," A MELODRAMA ADAPTED FROM THE YIDDISH BY MARJORIE BLAINE AND WILLARD MACK

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

Cyril Scott, whose hair is still of the raven hue, cast as the father of the girl. Somehow it doesn't seem twenty years and more since he used to be the young lover in " The Circus Girl," " The Geisha," and " A Runaway Girl," at Daly's, now given over to the movies. Another shock was to discover Josephine Hall, who was wont to evoke shrieks of laughter at the old Herald Square Theater with her " Mary Jane's Top Note," as the matronly person whom Sidney Toler called " mama."

Laura Hope Crews, last year with Cyril Maude in " The Saving Grace," adds another to her list of admirable impersonations by her work in " On the Hiring Line." Some excellent acting, too, is done by Minna Gombel, seen here last season in the name-part of " The Indestructible Wife," a short-lived play by the Hattons. Nor are these all of the good people whom Mr. Tyler gathered in for this latest comedy by that pair of clever coauthors, Harvey J. O'Higgins and Harriet Ford; for there are Donald Gallaher, one of the few boy actors to make good when grown to man's estate, and Robert Hudson, who burst into the limelight a year ago as the lead in " Some One in the House," seen briefly at the Knickerbocker.

Notable work in " On the Hiring Line " is done by Sidney Toler as the butler. After a long absence from Broadway, Toler turned up again in the same theater —the Criterion—where he played the *Duke of Buckingham* with Julia Marlowe in " When Knighthood Was in Flower," in 1901. He comes of an old Virginia family, and passed through all kinds of vicissitudes after he cut loose from the home leading-strings in order to gratify his ambition to become an actor, being stranded times almost without number.

Speaking of timeliness in plays, " The Challenge " was more up to the minute on the day when it left New York for Boston —October 25—than when it first arrived in the metropolis, early in August. It is all about the struggle between capital and labor, and in these days of strikes, lockouts, and rumors thereof, there's a vividness to the story that Eugene Walter has set forth which stirs the pulse as it is seldom stirred in the playhouse.

Holbrook Blinn was starred as the capitalist proprietor of a newspaper edited by his prospective brother-in-law, who returns from France more than ever obsessed by socialistic ideas. This latter part was played with remarkable skill by Alan Dinehart, better known in Chicago than in the East. He was in " The Gipsy Trail " out there, also in " The Crowded Hour," where might also be found Louise Dyer, the long-suffering sweetheart of " The Challenge "—which, I may remark in passing, contained the most completely realistic newspaper scene I have ever viewed across footlights.

" The Challenge " switched cities with another of the Selwyns' productions—" Buddies," which had been delighting Boston since early August. Another of the many postwar comedies, it is different from the others in having its scene laid in " quaint Brittany," and in seeking to avoid dramatic situations rather than to stress them. When I congratulated the author, George V. Hobart, on having achieved success through pursuing this policy, he admitted that he had sought to tell merely a simple story of the A. E. F. after the armistice, relying on interest in the characters themselves rather than on situations to win his public.

Of course, the three stars provided by the Selwyns count for much in the result. We see Donald Brian in France again, but in a very different environment from that which surrounded him last season in " The Girl Behind the Gun." Then there's Peggy Wood as the daughter of the house where the buddies are billeted. Doubtless you remember the big hit she scored in " Maytime," in its all-the-year-round New York run. She is a daughter of Eugene Wood, the magazine writer, and the goal of her ambitions is the Metropolitan Opera House. She has a good voice, and uses it well, as she demonstrates more than once in " Buddies," for the piece has several delightful airs by B. C. Hilliam. Yes, Brian dances, which will not surprise you, although it may be astonishing to be told that Roland Young sings—only just enough to get his name down once on the program among the musical numbers. As usual, he puts up a really artistic performance, following Wallace Eddinger, withdrawn to go into " Wedding Bells," another Selwyn show.

Young is an Englishman, whose family intended him to follow in his father's footsteps as an architect; but his bent toward the stage was too pronounced to be denied, and through his mother's influence he was sent to the Tree school of acting in London. As so often happens with young play-

LUCILLE CHALFONT, IN NED WAYBURN'S DEMITASSE REVUE AT NEW YORK'S NEWEST THEATER, THE CAPITOL, OSTENSIBLY DEVOTED TO PICTURES

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

GRACE KEESHON, AS SHE APPEARS IN ONE OF THE SEVERAL CHARACTERS THAT SHE IMPERSONATED IN "THE PASSING SHOW OF 1919," AT THE WINTER GARDEN

From a photograph by White, New York

ers, his early engagements all happened to be in plays that failed. On one occasion he rehearsed for eight weeks, to have the piece performed only once. Arthur Hopkins discovered him with the Washington Square Players, put him in "Good Gracious Annabelle," and since then the dramatic waters have been smooth for this talented young man with an individuality all his own.

"Buddies" has been likened to "The Better 'Ole." Well, they are both plays about the war, with incidental music. One might as well say that "Buddies" reminded one of "Lilac Time." I am inclined to the belief, however, that it is going to follow in the footsteps of both these war-time dramas in being eminently successful.

JANE COWL, TO STAR IN A NEW PLAY BY A NEW AUTHOR, "SMILIN' THROUGH"

From her latest photograph by Marcia Stein, New York

Of all the revues that annually strike this revue-ridden town, the one most deserving of the classification is "The Passing Show" at the Winter Garden. That bearing the 1919 hall-mark rings happy changes on the Broadway successes of last season, the whole being placed against a background of Watson Barratt settings. These find their finest play in the travesty on "The Jest," which substitutes for the brothers Barrymore Charles Winninger and Blanche Ring—husband and wife. The latter, of course, is *John*, and later switches from Italy to China as the Fay Bainter of "East Is West." Winninger's vociferousness as *Lionel* is a really remarkable transcript of the original, with just enough exaggeration to give the necessary burlesque touch.

It was out of a burlesque show the Shuberts got James Barton, who ran away with chief honors last summer at one of the Actors' Equity benefits, when he hastily substituted for Ed Wynn. At the Winter Garden he's at his funniest in the prize-fight scene. Other winners in the Garden fun bouquet are the Avon Comedy Four. There's better singing in the piece than usual, and the novelty sprung from the runway this time is the flashing of a slice of spot-light into your eyes from tiny mirrors in the show-girls' fans.

The overworked name of "revue" has even invaded the movie field. Just across Broadway from the Winter Garden, the new Capitol Theater gives us Ned Wayburn's "Demitasse" sample, although I should call it a full cup, as I went in at two o'clock one afternoon and remained until

LENORE ULRIC, STARRING AT THE BELASCO IN THE NEW DRAMA OF CHINESE LIFE IN NEW YORK, "THE SON-DAUGHTER"

From her latest photograph by Abbe, New York

half past five without seeing a single repeat on stage or screen.

Possibly the management of this stupendous new amusement palace will resent my placing it in the movie field, but that favorite opener of cinema houses—Douglas Fairbanks—was called in to inaugurate the new venture with his latest film, " His Majesty, the American," which was kept out of New York for weeks in order that the Capitol should have first go at it. I might call the place a concert-hall, as Pryor's Band plays three or four more or less classical pieces hand-running; but then those who admire this sort of thing could scarcely be counted on to applaud the " Vampire " number, or the Bronco Buck dancers in the Arizona scene. This last, by the bye, includes a rope-spinning specialty which should cause Will Rogers to keep a weather eye out from the movieland whither he has betaken himself, to make sure that Will Crutchfield does not leave him only his chatter to score with.

The Capitol, in short, is tremendous from whichever angle you choose to view it—size, variety, and the amount of entertainment you get for the money, the highest possible price you can pay being a dollar and fifty cents for a reserved seat, except on Saturdays and holidays, with oceans of others at much lower figures.

The theater itself vies with the Century in the beauty of its auditorium and promenades, and front seats suitable for the stage performances are made available for purposes of the film, when one does not wish to be so near, by throwing the feature picture on a special screen lowered close to the rear wall of the house.

The transformation of old farces into new musical comedies proceeds at such a pace that one wonders where the managers will find fresh plots when the existing supply gives out. Scarcely had " All the Comforts of Home "—an early piece by William Gillette, adapted from the German—reached Broadway as " Fifty-Fifty, Ltd.," when Clyde Fitch's " Blue Mouse," also from a Teutonic original, turned up at the Central as " The Little Blue Devil." In the latter case the program did not take the trouble to mention that the piece had ever seen footlights before in any shape; yet the names of the characters remain the same, likewise the jokes. Apparently only the songs are new. " The Blue Mouse " was produced at the Lyric Theater, December 1, 1908, and ran there until May, 1909, when it was removed to celebrate its two hundredth performance at the Maxine Elliott.

In those days Mabel Barrison, since faded from the scene, played the name-part, which now falls to Lillian Lorraine, late of the Follies. Miss Lorraine did not emulate Miss Barrison in the strength of the notices she got for her work; but " The Little Blue Devil " is not the sort of show dependent on favorable reviews. Let the hotel guest from Keokuk or Painted Post glimpse the name alone in the amusement columns, and note that it is a musical piece, and off he hurries for seats. He will find some good work done by Bernard Granville, costar with Miss Lorraine. I wonder if the Katherine Hatfield with whom Granville does the remarkable " treat 'em rough " dance in the second act has any sort of family connection with the Donnely & Hatfield minstrel troupe, which Mr. Granville joined for a season in his early days after playing five years with Ringling Brothers' circus as a clown. After that he went into vaudeville with Will Rogers, played with the 1912 Follies, and passed thence to the Winter Garden.

Another worth-while participant in " The Little Blue Devil " is Jack McGowan, with a good voice and manly presence, introduced to Broadway last season in " Take It From Me," which has proved a knockout success in Chicago this winter.

THE EYE AND THE EAR

Costumes and scenery make up the sum total of the appeal in " The Magic Melody," a romantic musical play by Frederic Arnold Kummer, with a score by Sigmund Romberg. The latter already has " Maytime " to his credit, and his reputation well may rest on his earlier work until he turns out something more striking than this latest candidate for favor. But there is no gainsaying the splendor of the outfitting, while a patient search was undoubtedly made for the girls whom the striking costumes bedeck. Thus chief credit for whatever success " The Magic Melody " achieves should go to Willy Pogany, art director for the production.

It is in this direction that the present drift of the theater trends, lament the paucity of humor and the tunelessness of songs as one may. The passing craze must have its innings, and, as the theater is enjoying

GLADYS MILLER, WHO IS JANE GILMOUR IN THE MUSICAL-COMEDY SUCCESS, "IRENE"

From a photograph by Abbe, New York

an unexampled era of prosperity, it looks as if the public believes that it gets its money's worth. This is the day—or rather the night—of the eye, with the ear practically a negligible quantity.

The night before I saw "The Magic Melody" I witnessed a performance of "The Mikado" by the American Singers at the Park Theater. Here is music of real quality and humor that the thirty-four elapsed years since its *première* have not staled. A few weeks earlier, at the same place, I heard "The Geisha" resung, and again I could not but note an infinite gap in the relative values of comedy and musical merit between this sterling product of the early nineties and the typical present-day hotchpotch of girls and scenery.

I am not wholly blaming the managers. They are giving the public what the public thinks it wants; but it's a pity that they cannot cater to the ear while appealing so successfully to the eye.

Reverting to the American Singers, their revival of Gilbert and Sullivan's "Yeomen of the Guard" may almost be called a novelty, so seldom has this quasi-serious work of the famous team been heard since its original production in 1888. Never so great a popular hit as the "big six," its music is the most distinguished of all the light-opera scores turned out by Sir Arthur Sullivan, while the opportunities for acting supplied by Sir William Gilbert are such as to appeal keenly to the player folk.

A highly creditable performance was put over by the company at the Park, and I was delighted to note that a big and highly appreciative house was in atten-

ISABELLE LOWE, LEADING WOMAN IN "THE DANCER," A PLAY ABOUT A RUSSIAN BALLET-GIRL'S LOVE FOR A PURITAN NEW ENGLANDER

From a photograph by Campbell Studio, New York

dance. Of course the scenery is not by Urban, nor are the girls as beautiful as those you see in the Follies, but neither are you expected to pay three dollars and fifty cents a seat.

In the series of musical comedies based on tuneless plays of the past, "Irene" stands head and shoulders above the rest. His own comedy, "Irene O'Dare," from which James Montgomery has elaborated it, proved so poor a thing that it never lived to reach Broadway, where "Irene" will probably remain for months to come. Here at last is a musical play where the ear finds something worth while with which to occupy itself. To be sure, the airs by Harry

Tierney are all of the tinkling type; but at least they tinkle pleasantly, while the story is sufficiently absorbing to make one regret missing a word of it.

Irene, the shop-girl attired as a lady in order to get patronage for an ambitious dressmaker, is a character new to the stage, and Edith Day, remembered for her "Tickletoe" song in "Going Up," makes a real creation of her. The other twelve principals—with the single exception of the clean-cut young leading man, Walter Regan, who was here in "Remnant" last season—are practically unknown in Manhattan, but they prove quite equal to all that is required of them, and furnish forth an entertainment in which youth dominates, while fun that leaves no bitter taste in the mouth permeates the evening.

"PALMY DAYS" AND "WEDDING BELLS"

Augustus Thomas, Arthur Hopkins, Wilton Lackaye—union of these three names as author, producer, and star has proved a triumphant triumvirate in "Palmy Days," a story of California in the picturesque times of '49, plus a strong flavor of stage life where one would expect pure melodrama. The Bret Harte atmosphere is a welcome change from the prevailing backgrounds seen this season. There is likewise a happy spirit of comedy, and for once a part that is a delight to an actor to play is at the same time easy for an audience to listen to.

What Thespian does not rejoice in spouting Shakespeare? Quotations from the Bard run all through "Palmy Days," whose leading character was once a dresser to Edwin Forrest, and fell down the only time he was called on to speak a line. Adroitly indeed has Mr. Thomas woven this fiasco into the warp and woof of his plot, and equally clever is his use of the portrait that *Kaintuck* treasures — so unique, indeed, as to mislead even veteran critics who leave before the final curtain.

Lackaye fits naturally into the rôle of a Southerner, having been born in Virginia. He originated his famous *Svengali* in "Trilby" in 1895. Genevieve Tobin, sister to Vivian Tobin in "On the Hiring Line," could not be improved upon as the *Cricket*, the sixteen-year-old barn-stormer around whose attractions the entire story hinges. George Le Guerre, a native of New Orleans, is excellent as the young partner of *Kaintuck*. His record of past performances includes eight hundred and thirty times as the boy with William Hodge in "The Man from Home."

To the extensive list of the season's hits must be added "Wedding Bells," a comedy by Salisbury Field, coauthor with Margaret Mayo of "Twin Beds." There are no beds at all in "Wedding Bells," and Mr. Field's play is so far from the farce class that it might almost be called high comedy. It is fine to see Wallace Eddinger in a success again—something he has failed to land since his notable performance in "The Boomerang." As the young man whose divorced wife turns up on the eve of his marriage to another woman, his work ranks with the best he has ever done. As for Margaret Lawrence, the divorcée aforesaid, she puts in the shade even what she accomplished in "Tea for Three" last season.

The Selwyns, however, did not stop with securing these two featured players in equipping "Wedding Bells" with a cast in which no false tones should sound. The entire nine put over as delightful a performance as can be seen in New York, and it wouldn't surprise me in the least to find "Wedding Bells" still ringing at the Harris this time next season.

LENORE ULRIC'S RISE TO STARDOM

There is probably no happier woman in New York this winter than Lenore Ulric, whose name glows in red incandescents above the doors of the Belasco Theater. Born in the little Minnesota town of New Ulm, close to the Canadian line, she was taken as a very small child to St. Paul, but got her education in Milwaukee, whither the family removed when Lenore was seven. Before she was ten she announced to her mother that she meant to be an actress, and no amount of parental opposition was able to swerve her from her ambition. Her persistency achieved for her a place in a local stock company, in which Ruth Chatterton was ingénue, and it seems almost prophetic of the colorful line along which her lot has been cast that her début should have been made in "Carmen."

Stock training fitted her to follow Laurette Taylor as the Hawaiian girl in "The Bird of Paradise," and three seasons in this part brought her to the attention of Belasco, who presented her as the Indian girl in "The Heart of Wetona." Her ability was unmistakable, and when "Wetona" had exhausted its drawing powers, the wizard of

MARGARET LAWRENCE, LEADING WOMAN AS THE DIVORCED WIFE IN THE DELIGHTFUL COMEDY HIT, "WEDDING BELLS"

From her latest photograph by Lewis-Smith, Chicago

DOROTHY MACKAYE, LEADING WOMAN IN "SEE-SAW," A MUSICAL COMEDY WITH A UNIQUE PLOT AND A TUNEFUL SCORE

From a photograph by Campbell Studio, New York

Forty-Fourth Street sought a new vehicle for his find from the Northwest. But Mr. Belasco never rushes things, and the search for just the right kind of part stretched itself out to a year, during which Miss Ulric, deprived of what had become the breath of life to her—actually fell ill.

So desperately eager did she become for the glare of the footlights, that in October, 1916, she accepted the part of *Dorothy Ormsby* in "The Mark of the Beast," which, fortunately for Miss Ulric's future, proved a hopeless fiasco. Had it succeeded, her career might have taken a trend that would have led far otherwise than as the star for whose advent the Belasco Theater waited in darkness for three months, in an autumn when theaters were more precious than rubies. Mr. Belasco finally arranged for Willard Mack to write "Tiger Rose," and as the French-Canadian girl enamored of an American engineer, Miss Ulric left all her previous achievements in the shade. She acted the piece for a solid year in New York, and then for another on tour without a break.

Her reward is stardom in "The Son-Daughter," a play of new China by George Scarborough—author of "Wetona"—and Mr. Belasco himself. The new piece will probably serve her for another long period, for not only does it afford the star wide scope for her varied powers, but also, unlike her previous Belasco backgrounds, it gives opportunity for gorgeous settings.

The scene is New York's Chinatown in 1911, and a new change is rung on an old device of the dramatist by having a father marry his daughter where she does not love, not from ambitious or sordid motives, but in a pure spirit of patriotism. The key-note of the first act is happiness, with *Lien-Wha* anticipating her betrothal to *Tom Lee*. The shadows gather deep in the second act, wherein the poor girl is promised in marriage to the highest bidder, to raise funds for the revolutionary party in China. In the third stalks tragedy, when *Lien-Wha*, finding that the money paid for her by the gambler, *Fen-Sha*, has been stolen and restored to him, her father being killed in the process, wheedles her new-made husband with caresses until opportunity offers to strangle him with his own cue. But the tragedy is all for the villain, the final episode being shot with a ray of promise that a radiant path to happiness and patriotic service lies at the lovers' feet.

Supporting Miss Ulric is a cast of notable excellence, with Harry Mestayer doing splendid work as *Fen-Sha*. I wonder whether Mr. Belasco remembered him as *Wing Sun Luey* in "The Cat and the Cherub" at the Princess, in 1914, when that house was the home of thrillers. Edmond Lowe, who plays the young lover, *Tom Lee*, will be recalled in a rôle of far different caliber—that of the scapegrace brother with Maud Fulton in "The Brat." There are twenty-six names in the program roster, every one of them Chinese.

BILLIE BURKE SPEAKS AGAIN

Distinction stamps itself as the impression on one's mind as one comes away from Billie Burke's performance in Somerset Maugham's "Cæsar's Wife"—distinction in star play, support, production—yea, and audience. For Miss Burke has a following of fine quality, and the story of the young wife who falls in love with her husband's secretary, but succeeds in conquering her passion, is of that non-sensational yet deeply subtle sort that has a potent appeal to a public of the better class. Miss Burke's still youthful beauty lends itself happily to the part. Her voice, mute for a season in the movies, has the same deep-cadenced charm as ever, and the light-and-shade effects in her work show keen comprehension of the emotions.

Her husband, Mr. Ziegfeld, in this wide departure from the Follies field, has given her a cast of superexcellence. Norman Trevor, recently struggling "Up from Nowhere," is the husband who begs his wife not to speak words which can never be effaced from her mind or his if once they pass her lips. Then there is Hilda Spong, last season the waster's wife, *Mrs. Dearth*, in "Dear Brutus," now scintillating as the husband's capable sister, while Margaret Dale reflects a happy combination of sentiment and common sense as the woman who loved unwisely and got over it.

I wish I might have seen Tom Powers as the secretary, but he did not remain with the company after the first performances in Washington, leaving Ernest Glendinning to suggest the youth and fervor that distinguish the part. The two sets are from the clever brush of Urban, who has appropriately subdued his tendency to dominate, but who lavishes rarely beautiful color-schemes on a view of Cairo seen through the French windows.

Light Verse

THE DANCE

OH, sweet, your little dancing feet,
So white, so light, so airy fleet!
They gleam upon the shining floor
Like lilies by a quiet shore;
They float and flutter, swift or slow,
Like doves at dawning, flying low.

While all the throbbing viols call,
While trembling flute-notes soar and fall,
So swift they answer, following
The vibrant air, the thrilling string,
That I, too, rise to cross and meet
The zigzag of your luring feet.

Oh, where, by aisle or shaded stair,
The dance may lead, I do not care,
So Love shall pipe and you shall be
My priestess of Terpsichore;
So that my eager heart may beat
In answer to your calling feet!

Nelle Richmond Eberhart

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

A COUNTRY girl is Lucy White;
She lives upon a farm,
Where nothing happens to excite,
Or fascinate, or charm.
She's sick and tired of hills and dales,
Calls simple life a hoax;
For she has read romantic tales
Of Greenwich Village folks!

A city girl is Mary Black,
And all too well she knows
The whole Macdougal Alley pack,
Each posture and each pose.
She's sick and tired of "atmosphere"—
Declares that it is rot;
She longs, with longing quite sincere,
For some suburban spot!

Harold Melbourne

ONCE UPON A TIME

BY the chimney, in her corner,
Grandma used to talk and sew;
She alarmed us while she charmed us
With her tales of long ago.
Logs cast up their shadow fingers
Toward the chimney's soot and grime,
And we shuddered as she started:
"Children, once upon a time—"

Now the city tells a story
All replete with other themes—
More confusion, less illusion,
More of dross and less of dreams.
But I pause, when all seems maddest,
Humoresque or mock sublime,
Just to conjure up the thrill of
"Children, once upon a time—"

Elias Lieberman

SENTIMENT

I WHISPERED in her shell-like ear—
Not six-inch shell—nay, nay, my dear!—
So softly that none else might hear,
That she was worth her weight in gold—
The selfsame story that was told
To Eve when she was just so old.

She harkened to my nothings sweet;
She must have heard my mad heart beat
Close by her shirt-waist, trim and neat.
Her long-lashed eyes looked into mine
With what to me was love divine—
Good gracious, Agnes, it was fine!

When I had brayed my little bray
There in the wood that autumn day,
I paused to hear what she might say.
Within that more-than-Sabbath hush
I watched her face with pleasure flush,
And heard her whisper: "Cut the slush!"

Strickland Gillilan

THE INTRUDER

WE didn't want the beggar,
We hoped he wouldn't come;
In business nothing doing,
And things were on the bum.
I wished I'd never married—
At least, that's half-way true—
The present and the future
Were black, and I was blue.

Our little flat was crowded—
There wasn't room to smile,
We couldn't keep a servant
Or put on any style.
I scarce could pay the landlord,
The butcher made me cry;
"Great Scott," I thought, "I'm thankful
There's only Liz and I!"

And then he came, the rascal,
To add to our expense—
A hairless, toothless creature
Without a grain of sense.
I don't know how it happened,
I don't know what he did,
But things are sure improving—
You ought to see that kid!

William Wallace Whitelock

THE PRETTIEST GIRL

HE explained to her: "I dreamed last night,
While asleep in bed I lay,
That I proposed to the prettiest girl."
And she asked: "What did I say?"

Eugene C. Dolson

JIM AND JOE

WHEN Jim was twenty, Joe eighteen,
The latter packed his grip one day.
"Good-by, old town!" he cried. "I mean
Right now to make my getaway.
The city is the place for me—
That's where they've got the snap and style!"
Jim scratched his head and said: "I see;
I guess I'll stick around a while."

Joe struck New York, but no one felt
The jolt in all that heartless mob,
And all that grudging fortune dealt
Him was a very modest job.
"Come on," he write to Brother Jim,
"And help me make my glittering pile."
The selfsame words came back to him:
"I guess I'll stick it out a while."

In dire disgust Joe swore to let
Jim struggle on without his aid,
And set himself to work to get
The biggest fortune ever made.
The years went by, but Joe had not
Attained his goal by many a mile,
When of old Jim, long since forgot,
He thought, who'd stuck it out a while.

Joe hiked back home, but found—gee-whiz!—
The little town had grown apace;
Jim was the mayor, the bank was his;
In fact, he seemed to own the place.
Without a word Joe sneaked away,
Remarking, with a feeble smile:
"Sometimes it kind o' seems to pay,
By gosh, to stick it out a while!"

Granther Greene

A DESCENDING SCALE

FAN'S sixteen this autumn. Her knowledge
Is simply stupendous—she knows
As much as a fresh-water college,
And twenty times more about clothes.
In fact, she is encyclopedic,
And holds, at the fall of the trap,
Her reasoned opinion in any dominion
Of science or learning on tap.

John's twenty. Like Fan, he's a wonder,
But older—he's found he can't be
An expert without chance of blunder
In more lines than, say, twenty-three.
Ben's thirty, or nearly, and limits
The subjects on which he's *au fait*
To six, at most seven—last year 'twas eleven;
It may drop again any day.

Alonzo comes next—he is forty,
And lays down the law of the land
On only three subjects; he's sporty,
And talks like a walking grand stand.
The last in the order descending
Is father, who fails at the test;
It's sad, but it's funny—he only makes money
For clothing and food for the rest!

Robert B. Gray

FINANCIAL RUIN

I SAW a man this morning who, although
He wept not, was a ruined man, I know;
The fact came to me as I looked him o'er,
Though I had never seen his face before.

How do I know he was a ruined man?
By one sure rule whereby a novice can
Deduct the truth from evidence that shows;
The stranger had just bought a suit of clothes!

Charles Horace Meiers

THE FOUR SEASONS

WHEN that I hear Clarinda sing,
I think it is the heart of spring.

When that I see Clarinda's smiles,
It seems the summer that beguiles.

When that I watch Clarinda's feet,
I dream the autumn trips the street.

But when I mark Clarinda's frown,
I know the winter has shut down!

Sennett Stephens

BY A CYNIC

WHEN she witches and beguiles,
She's acting!
When she simpers, when she smiles,
She's acting!
When she nestles close and sighs,
When she looks into your eyes,
When she sniffles, when she cries,
She's acting!

When she tries her best to please,
She's acting!
When she does her worst to tease,
She's acting!
When she boasts and when she brags,
When she nags, and nags, and nags,
Till you call all women "hags,"
She's acting—no more!

Harold Seton

The Odd Measure

Belgium Enlarges Her Borders

Malmedy, Long a German Fief, Rejoins Her Belgian Kinsmen

WHILE the Paris Peace Council was careful to arrange for plebiscites in the Saar, in Schleswig, and in upper Silesia, it justly refused Germany's plea to reconsider its decision that the little frontier district of Malmedy should go outright to Belgium, without even the formality of a referendum.

Malmedy, together with the twin principality of Stavelot, was a fief of the Holy Roman Empire until the French Revolution. Its vernacular, however, was Walloon—a dialect of French—and its territory formed an enclave between the principality of Liége, the duchy of Limburg, and the duchy of Luxemburg. Ever since 1870, Germany has tried to Teutonize it, but it never learned to be German. It had two French newspapers, *La Semaine* and *L'Organe de Malmedy*, and the language in its schools was French until 1876, when the German government prohibited the French tongue. Ecclesiastically it was within the archdiocese of Cologne, but the priests continued to preach in French until the archbishop forbade them, and then they used the Walloon dialect. Failing in every other effort, the late Cardinal Hartmann finally sent German priests to take charge of the churches in Malmedy.

Nevertheless, the Malmedians never considered themselves Teutons. Their territory formed part of the empire, but long before the war Berlin newspapermen who visited the place complained that in Malmedy Germany was always referred to as "over yonder with you in Germany."

As soon as the armistice was signed, all German inscriptions in the district were broken and torn down, the Allied troops advancing toward the Rhine were received with open arms, and the local authorities sent a petition to the Belgian government asking to be allowed to return to the mother country. It was this petition, no doubt, that the Peace Council had in mind when it refused the German request for a plebiscite.

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Norway's Claim to Spitzbergen

An Arctic Archipelago Valuable for Its Coal-Mines

IT is understood that Norway's claim to the island group of Spitzbergen will probably be recognized before the revision of the map of Europe is finally completed. During the Middle Ages, this arctic archipelago formed part of a Norwegian empire that included Iceland, Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and the Murman coast of northern Russia.

The old sagas relate its discovery within the arctic circle, east of Greenland, in 1194. King Haakon IV called it Svalbard, the Cold Mountain, and claimed sovereignty over it in 1261. Then it ceased to be remembered until the Dutch skipper, Barentz, engaged in the whale fishery, saw its pointed mountain-caps in 1596 and named it Spitzbergen. The wealth of its whale schools called Europe's attention to the far-off land, and Norway again asserted her rights, sending war-ships to defend them. The whalers of Elizabeth's day, from England and the Hanseatic towns, paid tribute for permission to fish within its waters. King James I set up a feeble claim to part of Spitzbergen's bleak shores, but Norway's right was recognized by many treaties in the seventeenth century. After that time the whales sought other waters, and Spitzbergen was left in its arctic solitude.

The first man to circumnavigate the islands, amid the perils of their floating ice, was Captain Carlsen, in 1863. In the closing years of the nineteenth century other adventurers sought out Spitzbergen, not in pursuit of whales, but of mineral wealth; and promising deposits of coal and iron were found. Norwegians opened the first mines in 1899, and last

year they got fifty-five thousand tons of coal from Spitzbergen. Claims have also been staked out by American, British, Swedish, and Russian mining companies. A recent census of the miners reported their number as a little more than eight hundred, two-thirds of them being Norwegians.

The climate is severe, and there are three months of darkness in winter; but not all of the land surface of the archipelago is covered with ice, for on the southern shores there are open, verdant valleys. Communication with the rest of the world is maintained by a more or less regular postal service, and there are three stations for wireless telegraphy.

* * * * *

A New Problem in Philology

The Curiously Close Similarity Between Common English and Kurdish Words

ONE of the odd by-products of the world war was an English-Kurdish vocabulary arranged for the troops who fought in the Near East, and one of the strange results of its compilation was the opening up of a new problem for the philologist. While the American soldier was busy over his "Easy Steps to French," the British Tommy was being drilled in polite conversations in the tongue used by the two or three million Kurds of Persia and Asiatic Turkey.

As early as 1915, the War Office asked Professor Mingana, of Manchester, to draw up a practical English-Kurdish vocabulary for the troops. The professor was surprised to discover, as the work went on, that there was a greater affinity between many every-day words in English and Kurdish, or Perso-Kurdish, than existed between English and French.

The Kurds, it should be remembered, are a clan of the Persian family. They are a predatory people whose neighbors have usually looked on them as a pest, and they have at all times retained their independence in spite of the invasion of Parthian, Sassanian, Roman, Arab, and Turk. They have no literature, and their speech is one of the primitive tongues of the Indo-European group. English, as we know, belongs to this same family of languages, and is closely affiliated to the older Teutonic dialects.

Most of the abstract terms in English can be traced back to Latin or Greek, whereas most of our common, every-day concrete words are of Teutonic origin; and it is these common words that best establish kinship between languages. What, therefore, was Professor Mingana's surprise on discovering that a host of such words in English and in Kurdish are almost identical. To choose a few as examples: "bad" is *bad;* "egg" is *hekk;* "band" is *band;* "be" is *bu;* "better" is *petter;* "bullock" is *bullack;* "coal" is *chal;* "chicken" is *chucka;* "cough" is *cokh;* "dark" is *tark;* "owl" is *ail;* "run" is *rawin;* "thunder" is *dunder.*

That there is more than coincidence in this is obvious, and Dr. Mingana recommends his discovery to philologists.

* * * * *

The Assyrians of Armenia

A "Lost Tribe" Amid the Racial Mixture of the Near East

THE Lady Surma, an Assyrian who looks like a portrait from the sculptures of ruined Nineveh or Babylon, is now visiting France and England, and is to come to America in an effort to interest us in the remnant of her homeless people, who have taken refuge in Persia. For three or four centuries her ancestors have been spiritual and temporal rulers of a Christian tribe dwelling near Van, among the mountains of Armenia. When Turkey entered the war, the Vali of Van sent for the Lady Surma's brother, Mir Shimun, who was patriarch, and promised him much if he would support the Sultan. After two months' discussion the Assyrians replied:

"You have called a jehad—a war against all Christians. There is only one thing for us to do. We throw in our lot with the Entente!"

They had arms of a sort, and warfare was waged against the Turks and Kurds, but a few months later their ammunition gave out, and they were driven from their villages up into the mountains, "where they had

little food and less salt," as Lady Surma tells it. Mir Shimun, the patriarch, taking two servants, made his way at night through the Turkish lines to the commander of a Russian force, to beg for help, but in vain. Then the Turks sent him a message saying:

"Your brother is in our hands in Constantinople. Surrender and save him."

"My brother is one man," the patriarch replied. "My people are my children. I cannot do it."

Finally the refugees, in scattered bands, fled into Persia, where many of them died of typhus and cholera, despite help from the American Red Cross.

Then came the Russian revolution, and the Muscovite troops, who had kept some sort of order amid the anarchy of northern Persia, went home, leaving the tribesmen to their fate. Mir Shimun tried to parley for peace with a Kurdish chief whose followers had harried the Assyrians, but he was shot down at the chief's door. Seeing no prospect of help, the refugees resolved to defend their lives to the last, when one day an airplane flew over their encampment. Thinking it an enemy, they fired at it, but as it circled lower and lower they saw the British colors, and when the young pilot landed, they rushed to him and kissed his hands. He told them where the British forces were—three weeks' journey away at Hamadan—and a new trek began.

The Assyrians are still in Persia, at Bakubah, but they are anxious to return to their own valleys once more, and the Lady Surma is pleading their cause.

* * * * *

The Modern Assyrians Are a Christian Sect

Not the Ancient Warrior Race That Held Sway in Nineveh

THE great Christological controversies of the early church are unexpectedly brought home to us by this appearance in Europe of a woman pleading for her brethren of the Assyrian church.

From time to time, during the war, despatches telling of outrages perpetrated on the Assyrians caused a pardonable confusion in the mind of many readers, who thought the Assyrians had passed away centuries ago, with the fall of their capital, Nineveh, before the rising power of the Babylonians, about 600 B.C. The name Assyrian in this instance, however, is not a racial, but an ecclesiastical designation. In early Christian days the church of Syria was torn by controversy on the subtle question of the natures of Christ—the divine and the human—and whether their union in His person was one of operation or of substance. Nestorius, one of the leaders in the controversy, was a Syrian monk who became Patriarch of Constantinople and was finally exiled as a heretic. It was only a few years ago that a Syriac copy, nearly a thousand years old, of his great "Apologia" was discovered and printed.

The Syrian church split up into the East Syrian, or Assyrian, and the West Syrian. To the West Syrian belonged the Maronites, who are in communion with the church of Rome; to the Assyrian the Chaldeans, who are followers of Nestorius, and who dwelt before the war in the vilayets of Van, Mosul, and Bagdad. The members of both branches are of the same race, have the same liturgical language, and observe a similar ritual.

During the Middle Ages the Assyrians spread in small communities into Persia, India, and Tibet, and traces of them have been found as far away as Vladivostok. Their patriarch lived in Bagdad and enjoyed high favor with the Arab califs; but under the Turks they have been persecuted and scattered to the ends of the earth. Wherever they have gone they have taken with them their creed and their language, and have always kept in touch with the home tribes of Armenia and Mesopotamia.

During the war, the British censors read letters from Assyrians in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, the United States, and South America to

their kinsmen of the Euphrates valley, some of whom fought bravely against the Turks and were mentioned in despatches for gallantry. It is for these people that the Lady Surma is pleading with the governments of Europe and America.

* * * * *

Reclaiming the Ancient Garden of Eden

Sir John Jackson's Project for Making Mesopotamia a Land of Plenty

AN elderly member of the Scottish church is said to have received great spiritual consolation from repeating "that blessed word Mesopotamia," and now Sir John Jackson promises much material gain to those who exploit the potential wealth of the traditional birthplace of the human race. Irrigation is the problem there, he says, and he thinks that about one hundred and fifty million dollars would be needed; his plan being to pool together the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and treat them as if they were one.

Sir John is the head of a famous British engineering firm which has built railroads, bridges, canals, and harbors in many parts of the world, and which has already constructed a large barrage on the Euphrates near the site of ancient Babylon. He hopes to see the waters of Mesopotamia's two great rivers scientifically utilized to irrigate the millions of acres that are now lying waste, so as to produce valuable crops of wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco, peas, beans, licorice, and other products. He holds it is impossible to exaggerate the potential wealth of the country, and he foresees a land capable of supporting many times its present population of about two millions.

Engineers who have visited Mesopotamia have been greatly impressed by the remains of the canal system of the ancient Babylonians, and speak with wonder of their engineering ability and of the masses of men they must have employed in the upkeep and repair of the waterways. An earth-shock seems to have occurred at some remote period, as a result of which the level of the rivers fell. It has been estimated that whereas the ancient Babylonians had to raise the waters only two or three feet to irrigate their grain-fields, their descendants to-day, using the primitive Persian wheel, have to lift them ten or twelve feet.

During the last three centuries, under the blighting rule of the Turks, a land that was once the Garden of Eden has been drifting steadily back to a desert state. If one hundred and fifty million dollars will make it blossom as the rose, the world war has at least taught that such an expenditure is a small matter against the sum total of human comfort and happiness.

* * * * *

Another Accepted Idea Exploded

The Flesh of a New-Born Calf Is Not Unwholesome

A RECENT edition of one of the standard American dictionaries contains the following definition:

> Bob Veal, the flesh of a newly born calf; unfit for food.

Probably no article of our dietary faith has been more universally accepted by Americans than that proclaiming the unwholesomeness of the meat of a calf killed at birth, or within anything less than three weeks of birth. The sale of "bob veal" has long been proscribed by Federal inspectors and forbidden by municipal health boards. And now the *Weekly News Letter* issued by the United States Department of Agriculture states, in the matter-of-fact style common to official publications:

> Experiments conducted by the Bureau of Animal Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, show that for food purposes a pound of meat from a young calf is as good as a pound of the most mature beef. Following the conclusive experiments, the Federal meat-inspection regulations were amended so as to permit passing carcasses of young calves.

The former belief to the contrary, it appears, "seems to have been an American prejudice without any foundation, for young veal is a standard

article of diet in Europe, and no ill effects result there from eating it." One is tempted to ask how many more of our established ideas, promulgated by experts and "specialists," and meekly accepted by the public, are equally erroneous. Are any other "prejudices without any foundation" receiving official support and legal enforcement?

This particular delusion must have been a costly one. If is stated that fully ten million calves are born annually in the United States, a considerable proportion of which—most of the male calves—have hitherto been killed at birth, although unsalable, because the milk they would consume in being brought to marketable weight was worth more than the price at which they could then be sold. Their immediate sale is now permitted, thereby adding to the farmer's revenue and possibly—just possibly—tending to lower the price of veal to the consumer.

* * * * *

The Dogs of the Great St. Bernard

Most of Them Were Among the Countless Victims of the War

EVERY one who knew the St. Bernard dogs of the famous hospice on the pass by which Napoleon crossed the Alps will regret that they were among the innocent victims of the great war. Food supplies ran low in Switzerland, and it was questioned whether the animals should be fed when so many human beings were on the verge of hunger. It was finally decided to keep alive only enough to perpetuate the breed.

Since the opening of the Simplon tunnel the dogs have not had so much to do as they once had, but they have continued to perform useful work. Poor travelers have still used the road over the Great St. Bernard, and while there is now a telephone at the Cantine de Proz, the last habitation on the way up from the Rhone valley, it is a long way to the top of the pass, and modern science has found no way to control avalanches. It was the immemorial custom of the monks to send a brother, accompanied by a dog, down each side of the pass every day of the year to meet travelers who happened to be caught by night or bad weather. No matter how much snow had fallen, or how blind the trail, the dog always led his party home, plowing sturdily through the snow to his kennel. The familiar legend pictures him as carrying a flask of wine at his collar and hunting for wayfarers in distress—and we owe much to legend, whether strictly truthful or colored by poetic imagination.

The monastery—founded in the year 962 by a Savoyard priest, St. Bernard de Menthon—stands at the top of the pass, more than eight thousand feet above the sea, so near the line of perpetual snow that the average temperature is below freezing-point. The monks are of the Augustinian order, the whole community numbering about forty, but only ten or twelve of them being stationed at the Alpine hospice. They usually begin their career there as novices of eighteen or nineteen, and the climate is so severe that few of them keep their health for more than twelve or fifteen years. When unequal to further service they are sent down to a branch monastery at Martigny, in the comparatively warm valley of the upper Rhone.

The American tourist who visits the hospice goes there in summer, when, to quote from a well-known guide-book, "amid the pleasure and novelty of the scene he is too apt to forget the dreariness of the eight or nine months of winter, when all the wayfarers are poor, when the cold is intense, the snow of great depth, and the dangers of storms frequent and imminent. It is then that the privations of these heroic men are most severe, and their services to their fellow creatures most valuable.

"Travelers are boarded and lodged gratuitously," adds the same impeccable authority; "but none should deposit in the alms-box less than they would have paid at a hotel."

It is not pleasant to read, however, that while the monks entertain some twenty thousand travelers in an ordinary year, their revenue from contributions is far below their expenses.

The Winds of Circumstance

BY EMMET F. HARTE

Illustrated by John Newton Howitt

DICK MAXWELL was a clerk in the Palace Clothing-Store at a salary of twenty-five dollars a week, and he was engaged to marry Edith Locke, whose father was president of the Commercial National Bank. Dick was twenty-two and Edith was nineteen at this particular time, and Dick's father, a railway engineer, killed in the cab of his engine when the limited went off the rails one stormy night, had been dead eight years. The young man's mother died the year he finished high school.

Edith Locke was one of the few "perfect blond types" of the small city of Netherton, and she was on terms of intimate confidence with her mirror. She had never known the emotion of yearning for something very much, yet being constrained to forego it. Vivacious, sparkling, beautiful, she seemed to Dick Maxwell to be the ultimate exemplification of his heart's desire.

He had gone quite a way himself in four years, having lifted himself by the shoestrings, so to speak, out of social and pecuniary nothingness to the pinnacle of possessing a good position, friends, and a bright future with Edith Locke as his promised wife. He had a hundred dollars in money deposited in the Commercial National Bank, and he had finished paying the instalments on Edith's solitaire ring, platinum lavaliere with a genuine ruby, and amethyst earrings. Edith, aside from a little nervousness about opals, was cosmopolitan in her tastes.

Marriage on a salary of twenty-five a week has been achieved successfully times without number. Edith was inclined to be cautious, however. Her father was a banker.

"When you've been promoted to fifty dollars a week, and have a few thousands saved, then we shall get married, Dick, dear heart. You'll not be long doing that."

"No chance in this town," Dick replied moodily. "I might be getting thirty-five a week ten years from now. I sha'n't wait for it. I'm going to the city, where there are opportunities."

Thus it was arranged between the affianced pair. Dick said good-by to his job in the Palace Store, his wife-to-be, and the town of his bringing up. He hied him with a hundred dollars and high hopes to the city—a place of promise where the rainbow's end touched the earth. Many have traveled the same road, but few have found the fairy pot of gold.

One of life's pathetic spectacles is the disappointed seeker of success. Indeed, success itself is only a state of mind, for it means merely obtaining one's heart's desire. But desires are merciless taskmasters. He who would possess all the money in the world and only succeeds in clutching nine-tenths of it must own himself a failure, while the would-be autocrat of earth shall admit defeat if there remains a single ragged patriot, with a loaded gun and a lone star on his tattered flag, yet hiding in the hills.

With swelling shirt-front and sparkling eye, Dicky Maxwell, confident argonaut, landed on the pleasant shore of his Colchis and proceeded to range the walled runways in search of a certain modern counterpart of the Golden Fleece. At the outset, he looked over the field tentatively to pick out an advantageous opening properly suited to a man of his aspirations and capabilities. Presently he thought it advisable to accept, for the time being, some fairly remunerative position which offered a chance for rapid promotion. Still later on, he began to comb the buzzing hives of Manhattan Island in a desperate and abject hunt for a job—any kind of a job that would enable him to continue eating and sleeping at regular intervals.

"YOU'VE MADE THE HIT OF THE WHOLE THING!" HE DECLARED FERVENTLY, AND WAS REWARDED WITH A GRATEFUL SMILE

A day arrived when the adventurer paced the worn matting of his hall bed-cell arm in arm with the gaunt specter of poverty. Other specters lingered in the offing, awaiting their turn at the grim promenade. They were the grim ghosts of defeat, despair, and hunger.

Dick Maxwell clung to his rope's end. The unplumbed void yawned just ahead.

At sunset his tenancy of the room expired. The hearts of lodging-keepers in the great city are notoriously immunized to stray germs of sympathy for innocence in distress. They have been made so by the needle of the nomadic dead-beat. After all, the margin of profit between him who would pay but can't, and the fellow who could pay and doesn't, is negligible.

At his dinnerless dinner-hour, young Maxwell passed down the stairs and out of the front door. He carried his worldly goods and chattels wrapped in a newspaper under his arm. Thus does the victim of fortune's whim remove, without clatter of vans or clutter of luggage, to newer environs. The process is not wholly without its merits.

As he passed downward and outward from that particular lodging-house forever, the departing guest noticed a letter stuck in the rack in the front hall. It was addressed to himself, in the familiar stilted script of Edith Locke. A block down the street he paused, tore the envelope across, and read the missive. It was written in the perfunctory, placidly gladsome, lazily serene phraseology of one who loiters, near-negligee garbed, in a swaying hammock, 'neath the cool shade of a rose-bower, in June.

I have been delving into the dark mysteries of home cooking. Really it is awfully interesting. I prepared dinner for papa and mama and little me yesterday evening, all myself. I will give you just an inkling of the menu. First, there was baked lake trout, followed by roast sirloin of beef and dressing. For the *hors de*—I don't know how to spell it—there were buttered parsnips, candied sweet potatoes, creamed onions. Also I had hot corn-bread, light wheat rolls, fruit layer-cake, cup custard, two kinds of pie—cream with shredded-coconut top, and old-fashioned cherry with a checkerboard top, like our great-grandmothers used to bake. Then spice-cakes, cheese, coffee—

The lines wavered and danced before the reader's eyes. He stared at the sheet of scented paper in his hand for a little while longer; then, stumbling as if stricken with a vertigo, he steered an aimless course to the westward — rudderless, compassless, drifting helplessly before the buffets of wind and tide.

II

Night, hour of a myriad winking lights along the avenues, descended. The winged life that flits forth from its innumerable nooks and crannies at the first sparkle of the electric lanes was astir—gaudy moths, staring owls, swifter and more eager hawks. A motley throng of human insects, fowls, and furred beasts, they buzzed and scurried to the lure of gleaming lights.

Out of a cross-town street trudged the drab figure of Richard Maxwell, guileless night-bird in search of neither pleasure nor prey. At Broadway the humming throng swept over and around him, bore him, a lost whippoorwill, in its heedless thrust. Squeezed, jostled, impeded, elbowed aside, he was spewed into an eddy, left behind. He moved forward mechanically, his mind occupied with only one thought. He was fiercely hungry, and he had neither money nor a single friend among those teeming thousands to whom he might apply for the price of a meal.

Then he remarked several people standing in a straggling line in the shadow of a tall, dark building. Mechanically his feet bore him toward the assemblers, and he accosted the man nearest him.

"What's the excitement?" he asked. "What's the crowd waiting for?"

The other replied to the question through a transient opening at one side of his mouth. He spoke in the curt, unfriendly, acrimonious tone of the dwellers in deserts of steel and stone. What he said sounded like:

"Ahr'r, this 's the soup-line. Looks like we're gonna be here till mornin'!"

Dicky Maxwell recalled in a vague way having read or heard of the city's famous bread-line. To him it had always been abhorrent—a sort of last frontier where a man became an expatriate to all sense of pride, honor, decency, and self-respect. It was a parade of pariahs to him, this muster at the scullery door of charity, a final, degrading tryst with ignominy.

That, however, had been his opinion before he himself felt the ache of hunger, the emptiness of stomach only equaled by a corresponding emptiness of pocket. Food, at the moment, seemed a thing desirable above all other things. He felt that one might well make any reasonable sacrifice

of pride, honor, decency, and self-respect to obtain even a crust of the famous bread —so he edged himself into the ragged line and waited.

A movement of those ahead of him indicated that he had been timely at the rendezvous. He paced forward with the rest, entering a dimly lighted passage through a narrow doorway. His feet came in contact with steps—a flight of stairs, obviously—which he ascended, wedged in the mass of his fellow venturers. And with them, presently, he found himself in the open space of a vaulted chamber which was littered with a jumble of trunks, crates, articles of household furniture, and a thousand and one other objects of familiar or strange aspect.

Sweating men in soiled overalls hastened here and there, bearing incongruous burdens, or shouting nonsensical commands which no one else seemed to obey. Other dim figures strained and tugged at various ropes and pulleys attached to immense screens and slides made of painted canvas. A man claimed the puzzled onlooker's attention by thrusting into his hands an array of metal and cloth articles with the words:

"Here's your tinware, Dreamy. Come out of it, now, an' show some speed!"

The young man stared at his burden. He held in his hands a shining helmet, a long halberd on a pikestaff, a shirt or tunic of chain mail, greaves, and a shield.

"Why—why—I—" he stammered.

"No time to gossip," the other barked at him. "Don't block traffic. Scat with the rest o' the supes!"

Supes! Dick's wits were sluggish, but he wasn't utterly stupid. The word "supe" was, as he knew, the stage designation for a supernumerary, or extra person, temporarily employed to perform a minor part in some spectacular scene of a play. The thought flashed through his mind that such near-actors usually received some sort of compensation for their services. They were paid performers; in fact, laborers worthy of their hire. He made haste to follow his fellow supes.

That same night he learned several things. He found that the production was called "Charlemagne," and was being presented by an advertised cast of five hundred people for the benefit of sweet charity. All moneys derived from the venture would be turned over to the Social Welfare Board. None of the leading actors and actresses received pay for their histrionic endeavors; but then these were all amateur performers, members of the city's highest-placed families.

The non-compensatory provision, happily, did not extend to supes. The latter received one dollar per night for appearing in glittering armor throughout two spectacular battles and one magnificent court. The production would continue to run for another whole week.

Dicky Maxwell could not afford to forego what was manifestly manna in the form of seven successive dollars; so he was among the first in line at the door each evening subsequently. Not only that, but his helmet fitted, and his tall, well-proportioned figure seemed born to a mailed shirt and metal breeches. He did not side-wipe his associate supes with shield or halberd when deploying down-stage, and he had the wide, ruthless stride of a man-at-arms. So they gave him the part of a king's bodyguard, with lines to speak. He said, in one place, "Sire, her majesty the queen!" and an hour later, "'Tis the enemy's envoy, bearing a flag of truce."

Once, as he strode with sword clanking against mailed shanks from the royal presence into the dimly lighted wings, he nearly trampled the queen underfoot. That young woman—he recognized her by the circlet crowning her cloud of golden hair and the splendor of her regal robes—was to his mind a person from some celestial sphere. He understood that she was a rich heiress—although he hadn't heard her name—and belonged to that holy coterie called high society. He wouldn't have dared to look at her, except surreptitiously; but by instantly clasping her—royal robes, queenly crown, golden hair, warm, softly yielding body, and all—in his arms, he saved her from falling.

She extricated herself from his profane clutches, and he mumbled an asinine and incoherent apology and rushed on his way. Nothing could have induced him to take a backward glance after having laid vile hands on the actual person of the queen; but she looked frankly after his fleeing figure with something that sounded like a suppressed but femininely human giggle.

Dick wrote to Edith Locke that he contemplated adopting the stage as his life profession. She replied that she could not commend his decision.

" There are thousands of successful bankers and merchants where there's not one moderately prosperous actor," she affirmed. " A casual word to one who is wise should suffice."

The least bit piqued, he promptly advised her that he was already making strides—very true!—in his chosen work, having accepted an important rôle in one of the big Broadway hits. She wrote:

As you please. After all, who am I to say yea or nay?

And in a postscript she added:

I've been out motoring several times with Vernie Keith—you know Vernie, of course. His father owns the Keith Department Store. Vernie is awfully jolly.

" Charlemagne " closed on a Saturday night. At that eleventh hour, Dick actually exchanged amenable converse with no less a personage than the queen.

During his engagement as a supernumerary, Richard Maxwell had observed a certain dowager who held the commission of mistress of the wardrobe or something. One of the other supes told him that this regal lady was Mrs. Vandyke Brown, wife of the multimillionaire profiteer in coffee futures. Dicky knew very little about coffee futures, but he understood the literal meaning of the word profiteer. He heard this female person speaking offensively to the queen—something about a lost silken sash.

" I sha'n't accept the blame," said the dowager. " It is of no consequence, anyway. All the royal robes in the world wouldn't make an actress of you, my dear. The audiences have been kind to you out of charity."

The queen sat on a property trunk in the wings. There was just a suspicion of dejection in her posture, albeit the light was poor. Dick approached her.

" The lady's remark was unkind," he said. " Your acting has been wonderful, and you deserved all the applause you received. She's only jealous."

" I—I didn't mind," the girl replied. " Her daughter was originally cast for the queen's part, but was given another rôle. Do you really think I have done half-way well?"

" You've made the hit of the whole thing!" he declared fervently, and was rewarded with a grateful smile.

The wind that blew Richard Maxwell into the temporary haven of king's bodyguard at a dollar *per diem* shifted abruptly and swept him out upon the stormy waters of no visible means of support. Once again he diligently combed the hives of the lower island in search of a chance to subsist, and once again he seemed about to drift inevitably into shoal water, rudderless and compassless.

III

One day he lingered between want-ad chasings in a little park where the roaring of " L " trains overhead blends almost musically with the squawkings and bleatings of automobile horns below. There is a certain symphonic quality in the harmony of discords, and the din of sounds soothed him. He sat down on one of the benches. One lone, dog-eared dollar bill remained temporarily in his possession.

Presently he remarked a young woman who sat opposite to him on another bench. She was garbed in a plain, faded brown jacket and skirt, the latter coming to the top of her chocolate tan high boots; her hat was a small, round, straw turban. Her eyes were large and round and very attractive. Her hair was brown. At the moment she was calmly engaged in eating one of those bakery confections commonly called a " snail," which she had disinterred from a paper bag beside her on the bench.

It is contended by one school of dogged investigators that woman is like unto a magic fountain, where a man in the time of his extremity may imbibe, through the medium of spoken words or even a passing glance, the boon of new courage to leap again into the arena for a grim grapple with destiny. The girl on the opposite park bench at least gave Dicky Maxwell an idea which was almost in the nature of an inspiration.

He rose, hastened to a bake-shop, purchased for fifteen cents a dozen so-called snails, and made a ten-course dinner thereon, with a couple of courses left over for breakfast. His dollar held vast possibilities for providing subsistence. By switching from snails to doughnuts or ginger-cakes, he decided that he could enjoy diversity of diet and fare sumptuously for three days, or possibly four. And any number of his ships might warp into dock during that period.

The next afternoon he stopped in the small park again. The girl in the faded

brown jacket and skirt was seated on her bench, eating snails. He particularly noticed her alluring eyes. She apparently noted his presence, too, for she stared at him with a frank, incurious gaze that was neither hostile nor friendly.

Presently he grew fidgety under her childlike and bland inspection, and hurried away with an assumed air of businesslike briskness—to replenish his portable larder with a fresh sack of baker's cakes.

On the third afternoon, upon his arrival in the park, the girl was not there. She came five minutes afterward, however, and, disposing herself on her favorite bench, with a contented wriggle and a sigh, extracted a snail from the paper bag beside her, and munched with care-free unconcern.

Things had happened in the preceding twenty-four hours, in the affairs of Dicky Maxwell. He was no longer a drifting derelict, veering to the buffet of wind or tide. One hour previously he had landed a job as night porter in one of the dingy, side-street hotels. He was to enter upon his duties at six o'clock that evening. The position was attractive to the point of opulence. He was to receive his board, lodging, and a monetary consideration of ten dollars per week of seven days.

In view of such a cloudburst of manifest blessings, he had squandered his last remaining quarter for fruits—an apple, a pear, a banana, an orange. Of a sudden, emboldened by a feeling of sympathy for one who yet was condemned to a dry, Barmecide feast of snails, he rose, crossed the thin ice that intervened between the two iron benches, and broke through.

"Wouldn't you like an orange?" he asked politely, proffering his sack.

The girl's calm gaze traveled from the sack of fruit to the hand that held it, then up the sleeve which seemed to have some connection thereto, along the ridge of a broad shoulder to the well-shaped chin, thence upward to mouth, nose, and, naively, to his deprecating dark eyes.

"Thank you," she said, "I don't care for oranges."

Her voice was softly musical, with a tone-quality that pleased the ear.

"Try a pear, then," he persisted.

She shook her head in a decided negative. He grinned foolishly, bowed, and turned toward his own bench.

"I'm very fond of apples," she said, smiling up at his figure in profile.

He faced about again with pleased alacrity. She moved to make a place for him on the bench.

"Sit down and tell me about it all," she said. "Something good has happened today, I just know—something to make the clouds look pink instead of blue."

Did Richard Maxwell, faithful to his plighted troth with Edith Locke, raise hands and eyes in righteous horror at the thought of confiding his intimate hopes and fears to an unknown girl who ate snails and smiled at strange young men in a park? Certainly not. He sat down without hesitation and told her the thrilling history of his life.

As a fair exchange, she submitted to his consideration a story dealing with the interesting adventures of one Elizabeth Ann Stark.

"My name memorializes two notable characters—one poetic, the other historical," she said. "I'm not only *'Lizbuth Ann,* who was such a wonderful hired girl, but I'm also Betty Stark, who helped to win the Revolutionary War at the risk of widowhood."

Dicky Maxwell and the city had not been able to get on terms of reciprocal amenity. Elizabeth Ann Stark, by her own confession, had arrived at the same park bench with him along a different but similarly uneven pathway.

As a typist without skill in the writing of shorthand, she was, as she characterized it, briefly briefless. Inexperienced clerks, bookkeepers, cashiers, salesgirls, and factory workers were not the vogue that season either. There was a decided stagnation, too, in the demand for old ladies' companions, children's music-teachers, nursery-maids, doctors', dentists', and lawyers' office assistants. One could always find sewing to take to one's room, but it was soul-wearying work, and one simply had to get a breath of air daily or die of suffocation.

Elizabeth Ann Stark was a philosopher of the Micawberian school.

"It's only a question of time," she declared, "until everybody's chance pops out of its hole. The only thing to do is to be Towser-on-the-spot and nab it when it appears. My idea of a really worth-while fighter," she continued earnestly, "is the fellow who never quite grasps the notion that he is whipped."

What was it that made the cadences of

her voice, the odd little tones and inflections, linger in Dicky Maxwell's consciousness that night, hours after he had left her? What was it that made him impatient, when he awoke at noon after four hours' sleep, to dress quickly and be off to a certain small space in the jungle of sky-scrapers where "L" trains roared and motors throbbed? He didn't stop to analyze or classify his feelings that day, in view of the fact that he found her, as usual, with her bag of bake-shop titbits, seated in her accustomed place.

The thought had occurred to him to tell her of Edith Locke; but when he saw her he forgot that there was or ever had been such a person as Edith Locke, and they talked about many other things of mutual and superlative interest to themselves.

A BRUSK PERSON ACCOSTED HIM ON HIS RETRIEVING TRIP. "WANT A JOB, YOUNG FELLER?" WERE HIS EXACT WORDS

On the following day, when she wasn't in the park upon his arrival, and did not come at all, though he waited, watching and hoping, for almost three hours, he made something very near to an analysis of his state of mind. Elizabeth Ann Stark, he decided, had entered into his daily scheme of life. Her voice, her calm gray eyes, her oddly optimistic philosophy, her quick flashes of humor—these had all of a sudden become necessary like air, food, water, and sunlight — they were essential constituents of his peace of mind.

With an emotion akin to bleak despair, he thought:

"What if I never should see her again?"

She had not told him where she lived. Hundreds of dreadful things might have happened to her in the space of twenty-four hours. He practically knew that her funds were at low tide. A sudden despair might have overwhelmed her and she might have—or she might have been taken ill, or run down by an automobile and killed, or drugged and carried away.

Or, saving thought, she might have been offered a place as some wealthy old lady's companion, miles away in the strange maze of the aristocratic, northern suburbs. But, disconsolate thought, how could he ever hope to find her there?

Find her he must if life were to continue worth the living. All at once a scroll seemed to unroll in his consciousness, and he knew, he understood. He wanted Elizabeth Ann Stark! She was his woman, his mate! He wanted her—not some time to be determined by the smile of capricious fortune, some indefinite date in the future, but at that precise moment, then and there, to be his friendly adviser, his comrade, his faithful side-partner, whether clouds lowered or the sun shone. Therefore, he must needs find her.

That night he made some minor mistakes in his duties as a porter, exchanged verbal barrages with the boss, and severed his connection industrially with the hotel. He returned to his most recent bed-cell lodging-house, where he finally fell asleep and dreamed that he and Elizabeth Ann Maxwell, *née* Stark, were spending their honeymoon at Niagara Falls and points west.

Edith Locke seemed like some silly character he'd read about in a book a long time before. Even his mental visualization of her was hazy and unreal. Thus does love hang blinders on us all.

On his way to the little park next day, a vagrant breeze blowing down the cañon carried his hat into one of those abysses where human ants were digging the foundation-holes for a new human beehive. A brusk person with a half-smoked cigar, wearing a slouch hat, accosted him on his retrieving trip.

"Want a job, young feller?" were his exact words.

"Sure!" said Dicky Maxwell promptly.

The man took his name, his coat, and sack of doughnuts, giving in exchange a shovel and a few specific directions. Dicky Maxwell had become a wage-earner in the sum of three dollars and fifty cents per day of eight hours.

That night he was tired, but he walked to the park after supper. He saw no one he knew. The next night he was an aching, squeaking, physical wreck of a man. He limped painfully to the park after supper. Breath of exotic flowers, processions of cherubs, sweet strains of singing birds in leafy dells! Elizabeth Ann Stark sat on her accustomed bench, eating a cooky—not a snail, mind, you, but a flaky, sugar-coated cooky.

She smiled up at him serenely. Never in the humble and worshipful eyes of devoted lover did maid look more winsomely demure, more delectably fair, more wholly desirable.

His joy over seeing her again, the actual realization of standing in her presence, of looking into her eyes, of hearing her voice —made him garrulous with love's passionate eloquence. What he said was:

"Gee! Just a moment ago a taste came in my mouth of fresh-roasted peanuts. Do you like hot peanuts?"

"Why, I should say I do," she replied. "And buttered popcorn, too. I'll tell you what—let's squander two nickels for peanuts and popcorn. I'll go halves."

"And then let's go to a picture show," he proposed daringly.

"All right, sir," she acquiesced with an air of reckless abandonment. "We'll throw peanut-shells on the floor, and make it a regular orgy!"

The darkened interior of a movie theater, with a man and a maid eating popcorn and peanuts from the same paper bags, is love's own chosen environment. It is so easy to hold each other's hand unseen by those sitting on either side, and even a two-piece orchestra's tintinnabulations serve to

throw a sound-proof wall around whispered phrases of endearment.

"When I didn't get to see you for two whole days," he murmured in subdued but tenderly tragic tones, "it seemed as if a black shadow covered the world. And when I half-way felt that maybe something might have happened, that it was possible I might never see you again—"

The plaintive strains of violin and piano ceased for the space of a moment, then began once more. In the interval he felt the soft, tenderly expressive, deliciously thrilling pressure of her fingers—doubly thrilling because of the sensitive blisters that covered a considerable area of his palm.

"Elizabeth Ann—sweetheart—tell me that you love me just the least, little, tiny mite—do you, Elizabeth Ann?"

"I—I love you a good deal more than just a little tiny mite, Richard," she whispered in return.

IV

For all of the strange, new, radiant glamour that filled his dingy hall bed-cell that night, Richard Maxwell grappled with several matter-of-fact problems that troubled him. Two objectives stood out in his mind as being preeminently important—first, to obtain honorable release from his pledge to Edith Locke; second, to marry Elizabeth Ann Stark without a single hour's needless delay.

The second objective was a supreme issue, he felt, with the first as a sort of paramount intervening obstacle. Statesmen and sages have burned gallons of midnight oil over less strenuous and perplexing problems. He fell asleep from sheer brain weariness without having formulated the initial move of his strategic campaign.

Fate, whose strategy is frequently too subtle for human understanding, still stakes heavy hazards on the element of surprise.

But then fate has all the advantage of being able to cut across lots unseen and, if necessary, to have a tall tree growing exactly over the chest of ducats, or stick of dynamite, as the case may be, before we happen to wander that way. The minx had her machinations set to mature on shorter notice, however, in the matter of Richard Maxwell.

The mail man left a notice for him at his lodging-house — to which he had returned, fortunately—requesting him to come to a certain post-office substation and call for a registered parcel. He wondered all the way there who could be sending him a registered parcel, and then he found out. The postmark was Netherton. The packet was from Edith Locke. It contained one diamond solitaire ring, one pair of earrings, one platinum lavaliere, and a brief note, written in the familiar stilted script of some one he seemed to have known somewhere a long time before.

I am breaking our engagement. I am sure it is for the best. Vernon Keith and I are to be married in three weeks. I hope you'll not feel badly, Dick, dear.

Feel badly? With nearly two hundred and fifty dollars' worth of jewelry in his hand, which could be converted into real money with little difficulty? With the possibility of having Elizabeth Ann Stark his wife within the space of hours? Well, no, one could hardly say so.

The man in the jewelry-shop looked at him a bit suspiciously until he thrust Edith's letter into his hand.

"I see," the man grinned. "Two hundred dollars."

"Two hundred dollars and the plain gold wedding-ring there in that case," said Dicky firmly.

Much can be accomplished in an hour, when the wind sets fair and destiny steadies the helm. Gulfs whose breadth and depth seemed immeasurable dwindle to dimpling pools, and the hostile cliffs that guard the land of heart's desire melt and fade into gentle reaches of golden strand.

Elizabeth Ann Stark became Mrs. Richard Maxwell within the three-quarters of an hour following Dicky's egress from the jewelry-shop. There were still several minutes of daylight left for them to scan the advertisements of "furnished flats to let." They found what they sought. Two rooms, furnished for light housekeeping, second floor front, gas range, running water, only eight dollars a week. Their marriage certificate and a week's rent were sufficient credentials. To remove their belongings into the new nest required comparatively no time at all. Elizabeth Ann owned a trunk; Dicky didn't.

They were very, very happy. Wonderful experiences crowded their waking hours —visiting the grocer's and baker's, buying bottles of milk. The whole world about them was a new and intoxicating realm of roseate dreams.

On the second day, Dicky returned to his excavating. The boss frowned.

"Well? Ye didn't show up yesterday. Soused?"

"Worse," the young man laughed happily. "I've been getting married."

"Married, eh? Didn't know when ye was well off—humph! Well, good luck to ye, my lad!"

Which shows that the saying, "All the world loves a lover," applies to bosses of excavating-gangs just the same as to other people.

It was summer, and the big city sweltered; but the Maxwells were the exception that proved the rule. In their stuffy two rooms, without bath, they were delightfully comfortable. Metaphysicians assert that one's mind is the sole maker of comfort or discomfort.

Richard Maxwell went daily to his digging. He continued to dig assiduously for three weeks, becoming a sturdy excavator with hardened muscles and red hands adorned with calluses the size and texture of bone buttons. One day he was assigned to the concrete-mixing gang. He was to receive four dollars a day henceforth. Pleasant vistas opened up.

The first elusive tang of autumn was in the air. For many days Dicky had been coming home dead tired in the evening. Concrete-mixing is a first-rate equivalent of hard labor, be the mental attitude what it may. Elizabeth Ann's eyes grew wistful as she noted his lagging step, his lusterless gaze. Sometimes he fell asleep in his chair after supper before she could get the dishes cleared away.

"You are working too hard," she told him. "I wish you would try to find some easier work, Richard—clerking in a store, for instance."

"Not for me!" he laughed, flexing a knotted biceps that rippled up in a great lump below the short sleeve of his undershirt. "This is the life, sweetheart o' mine. And we're getting ahead fast. Think of it! Nearly two hundred saved. We'll go to theaters and live like rich idlers this winter. Do you know," he confided, "one time I thought I'd like to become an actor myself?"

"No! What prevented?"

"My opportunity boarded a train and left town. The wind blew my hat into an excavation, and I saw a girl named Elizabeth Ann eating cookies in a park."

"I have a secret to confide, too," she said. "I've had an ambition ever since I was a tiny child. Only this summer was I permitted to have my cherished longing gratified. Isn't it fine to get one's wish after years and years?"

"What was this heart's desire of yours?" he asked, drawing her to his knee.

"It was to sit in a park on a bench all by myself, and eat all the sugar snails I possibly could!"

V

Came the first day of October. Richard mounted the stairs to their two rooms, flushed with some new emotion. His eyes were bright, his step was buoyant with the spring of youth. After all, mind does have some control over matter. He had mixed concrete that day just the same as usual, but to all appearances he wasn't tired.

"'Rah! 'Rah!" he cheered, swinging his wife from the floor and holding her in the air while she kicked to be put down. "I've been promoted. I'm in charge of the gang, beginning to-morrow. No more daily wages for mine! I'm on a salary, now—forty a week. Congratulate me, quick, before I wake up!"

"How can I, you hateful thing?" she giggled. "Put me down, please, and I'll give you a nice oniony kiss."

As assistant foreman of the mixing-gang, Dicky was a success. Tons of concrete went into walls and supporting columns where only half-tons had gone before. In one month he made good to the extent of a raise of salary to forty-five dollars a week. The big boss had called him "Dick," and had spoken casually about what was to be his part of the job in another big contract which the firm had just landed.

It was Sunday morning. Dicky, bulging out of his comparatively new suit, purchased only a month previously, was grunting as he laced his shoes. Elizabeth Ann had insisted that he should dress up because of an enormous big surprise she'd planned for him.

"To-day"—she threw out her arms in a world-encompassing gesture—"to-day, Richard of the big heart, we are to go a voyaging into a land of wondrous dreams—the country of make believe!"

He was familiar with her moods; they were a source of great joy to him.

"A trip to Coney would suit me fine,"

he said, "although it's getting a little late in the season."

"It isn't Coney," she told him. "It's more marvelous than that. You must be prepared for lots of things, my Richard—things you never dared to imagine as coming true."

He smiled indulgently at her air of mystery and at her gray eyes shining with strange excitement.

At the door of their little sitting-room—which was also their parlor and bedroom — she paused and clutched his arm almost fiercely.

"'RAH! 'RAH!" HE CHEERED. "I'VE BEEN PROMOTED. I'M IN CHARGE OF THE GANG, BEGINNING TO-MORROW"

"No matter what happens," she said in a tone of wistful pleading, "you will love me just the same, won't you, man o' mine? You will not change the least little bit, will you, Richard?"

"Why—why, you're actually crying tears," he said. "Come, cheer up, little girl. Nothing could be as serious as that, could it? Sure not!"

"Good-by, little old room!" she cried; then, holding fast to his hand, she led him down the stairs. "First, we're to go to the park—our park," she said. "I wasn't crying from the blues, dear—just happiness."

They sat on the selfsame bench where happiness first touched them with its magic wand. A big blue automobile drew up near them and waited by the curb. The driver, unseeing, stared straight ahead.

"Let us go," said Elizabeth Ann, rising and taking her husband's work-seamed hand in her own soft, clinging one. She walked toward the car. The chauffeur, quickened into animation, held the door aside for them, bowing low, and touching his cap.

"Are you awfully glad to see me, Martin?" she asked smilingly.

"Mighty glad, Miss Ann," the man replied. "It's been a long, long time since you rode in this car."

"So it has, Martin. This is my husband, Mr. Maxwell. And now"—she sighed as she sank back upon the tufted cushions—"you may drive us home, please."

The car moved smoothly forward, toward the north. Richard Maxwell was fast losing his grip on events, and with it his sense of proportion. As if in a dream, he heard Elizabeth Ann's voice.

"Once upon a time," she was saying, "there was a lonely girl, an orphan. Her parents died when she was a little tot, and she had been brought up by an aunt and uncle who were childless. They were very wealthy. At their death, when the girl was nearly grown, she inherited their beautiful home and a lot of money. Men of many sorts sought the heiress for wife, but none of them pleased her. She had odd notions. She thought she would like to marry some man she could love. She didn't want to marry any man as a girl with wealth, don't you see, because she could never be certain her money wasn't the reason. So she just ran away and became a poor girl, living in a rented room down-town and doing as she pleased. For example, she liked to sit on a park bench and eat bakers' cakes, so she did it. And one day she saw the man she wanted. She fell in love with him. He was poor. She thought how lucky she had been to do as she had done, for in her true identity the man she loved would never have spoken to her. He was timid enough as it was.

"They were married, and were very happy together in their two little furnished rooms within sound of the roaring 'L' trains. For love, the master magician, knows how to tint drab walls until they glow with the vivid colors of roses, and where love is, the humble odors of steak and onions take the fragrance of rare orchids. What is that old quotation? 'Where thou art, *Caius*, there am I, *Caia*'—isn't that it? And so, one day, this funny girl I've been telling you about decided that it was time the deception should end. So she slipped away to the corner drug-store, asked permission to use their telephone, and—"

The car swerved in toward the curbstone. It was a quiet street where tall, stately houses stood in orderly rows on either side, with the dignity of worshipers in a church pew. Martin brought the car to a standstill in front of an old-fashioned mansion of brownstone.

"And *Caius* and *Caia* came home, all on a summer's day, and afterward—well, they are supposed to go on living happily ever after, aren't they, Richard? Do you like my little story?"

She stood up to descend from the car. Richard Maxwell stared at her dully, as if he could not trust himself to speak.

"I can't quite—get it all—yet," he said at last. "How could you, a girl with wealth and position, fall in love with just a common nobody like me?"

"Hush, man o' mine! You had no business taking me in your arms that night in the wings. And you told me I was a great actress."

"Wings? Actress? I can't understand."

"Silly, are you totally blind? I was the queen in 'Charlemagne,' and you were the handsome king's body-guard. I wore a big yellow wig. I suspect that I wasn't the first queen in all history to cast sheep's eyes at a good-looking king's body-guard."

"The queen!" he repeated. "And you fell in love with me, a supe?"

"But I fell in love with a regular man, Richard, not a clothier's dummy. You've proved that. And, gracious me, haven't I the right to choose the man I want for my husband? I claim that right. Dear heart, aren't you the least bit curious to see the interior of this home of ours?"

"Elizabeth Ann!" he murmured. "Elizabeth Ann, the queen—and you say you have lots and lots of money?"

"Bushels, Richard—are you coming?"

"I'll come on one condition."

"It is granted," she said. "What is it?"

"That I'm to go on being foreman of my mixing-gang. I hope to be a sure-enough sky-scraper-builder some day."

"Did you think I wasn't already aware of all that?" she laughed. "Why, Richard, I've ordered all sorts of new overalls and jumpers and shirts and shoes for you. You see, I knew you intended to make good. Now, will you accompany me, sir? Your queen commands!"

"Coming, your majesty," he replied.

And a minute later, Martin, the unseeing, saw them, hand in hand, mounting the terrace steps.

Why Great Books Live

NOTHING CAN EVER SUPERSEDE THE IMMORTAL CLASSICS OF THE WORLD'S LITERATURE—THEIR PLACE IN HUMAN LIFE AND THOUGHT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO-DAY THAN EVER BEFORE

By Richard Le Gallienne

EVERY now and again the old Battle of the Books is fought once more, and some opinionated iconoclast, usually young and mentally ill-nourished, undertakes to show that the great books of the world have either got their reputations under false pretenses, or retain them merely through superstition, or that such of them as once had value have outgrown their usefulness and have little or no application to man in the present advanced state of his development.

Homer's "Iliad," for example—what has your modern American to do with the siege of Troy, supposing there ever was such a siege? "What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?" Even Walt Whitman, though he could never have written a line of his "barbaric yawps" if he had not been steeped in the great literature which he talks of superseding, seemingly commits himself to this shallow view when in his bullying fashion he exclaims:

Come, Muse, migrate from Greece and Ionia;
Cross out, please, those immensely overpaid accounts;
That matter of Troy and Achilles's wrath, and Æneas's, Odysseus's wanderings.
Placard "Removed" and "To Let" on the rocks of your snowy Parnassus.

The Bible, as well as the whole of European classical literature, was included in Whitman's grandiose relegation of all masterpieces previous to the "Leaves of Grass" to the dust-bins and curiosity-shops of the past.

Again, take Dante's "Inferno" or Milton's "Paradise Lost." Seeing that nobody nowadays believes literally in a material hell or in the legend of Adam and Eve, what message can such books possibly have for the twentieth century, whose sole articles of faith would seem to be gasoline and economics? What is the use of reading about things that no longer exist or never did exist? "Don Quixote," and Spenser's "Faerie Queene," and "Faust"—what have such books to say to your modern man?

Of course the answer is that all such great books of the past have just as much, and just as little to say as they ever had, in accordance with the hands into which they fall. If man is to develop into a mere monster of commercial efficiency, with all that we have been accustomed to call human nature starved and "prohibited" out of him, they will, of course, have less and less to say, or rather they will have fewer readers to say it to. But so long as man remains anything like a complete human being, and retains his sense of the mystery of his life in a mysterious universe, of its tragedy and comedy and beauty and pathos; so long as he is visited by obstinate questionings as to his being's end and aim, his purpose and destiny; so long as he is stirred by spiritual aspirations and moved to joy and sorrow and laughter he scarce knows why; so long, in short, as he is something more than a stomach, and his brain something more than a calculating-machine; so long will great books, whether of the past, present, or future, live for him, and light and charm him on his way.

AN IMMORTAL PASSAGE OF THE "ILIAD"

Let us give a concrete illustration of how a great book lives, and cannot help living, however far removed from us in its period and its peoples and its fashions. Let us take that "Iliad," with which your modern American has supposedly so little in common, that hackneyed passage—hackneyed

yet vivid still as the last-released living picture—where Hector, before going into battle, says good-by to his wife and child. Andromache stands by his side, with their little one in her arms, and he, towering above her in all his war gear, smiles tenderly down on the two loved ones whom he is never to see again, and, in his fatherly yearning, stretches out his arms to his boy.

But the child shrank crying to the bosom of his fair-girdled nurse, dismayed at his dear father's aspect, and in dread at the bronze and horsehair crest that he beheld nodding fiercely from the helmet's top. Then his dear father laughed aloud, and his lady mother. Forthwith glorious Hector took the helmet from his head, and laid it, all gleaming, upon the earth; then kissed he his dear son and dandled him in his arms, and spake in prayer to Zeus and all the gods:

"Oh, Zeus, and all ye gods, vouchsafe ye that this my son may likewise prove even as I, preeminent amid the Trojans, and as valiant in might, and be a great King of Ilion. Then may men say of him, 'Far greater is he than his father,' as he returneth home from battle, and may he bring with him blood-stained spoils from the foeman he hath slain, and may his mother's heart be glad."

So spake he, and laid his son in his dear wife's arms; and she took him to her fragrant bosom, smiling tearfully. And her husband had pity to see her, and caressed her with his hand, and spake and called upon her name:

"Dear one, I pray thee be not of oversorrowful heart; no man against my fate shall hurl me to Hades; only destiny, I ween, no man hath escaped, be he coward or be he valiant, when once he hath been born. But go thou to thine house and see thee to thine own tasks, the loom and distaff, and bid thine handmaidens ply their work; but for war shall men provide, and I in chief of all men that dwell in Ilion."

Does it make any difference in the undying appeal of this lovely human scene that Troy has long since vanished from the earth, and that the dust of father and mother and babe have long since been blown about the centuries? It does make this difference—that the appeal is thus all the more intensified, bringing home to us as it does the antiquity of human affections, how touchingly old is the brave, laughing comradeship of a man and his wife even in the face of death, and how terribly dear to both is the child of their love. But for the difference in military uniform, what is to distinguish the scene from thousands of such leave-takings of modern American husbands and wives during the recent war?

If there were nothing else in the "Iliad," that were enough; and the reason, of course, why the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" still live, and will continue to hold their place in the literature of the world, is that in them a great poet was able so to wield the material of universal human life—which has been, is, and will be the same whenever and wherever lived—in so real, so vivid, so moving a fashion that the pictures of it remain as indestructible as the material, symbolic representations of the human drama which apply wherever humanity exists.

Now the *raison d'être* of Homer is, in varying manifestations and degrees, the *raison d'être* of all great literature whatsoever. It is—reality.

Every kind of great book embodies some kind of reality. No book has lived, or can live, that has not some form of reality behind it. It has first existed as fact of some kind, were it but a fact of human fancy or feeling, or merely the individual experience of one human being, its author. And to this fact, of whatever nature, the genius of the writer has enabled him to give an embodiment in the medium of words "more enduring than brass."

Some books, indeed, live, so to say, by position rather than by their intrinsic greatness, by their being the first of their kind, or by their having a historical importance as records, or discoveries, or as pioneers. But the books properly to be called great became and remain so because of a peculiar combination of greatness in their material with greatness in their writers. A great argument—to use the old term—is not in itself enough; the writer must prove himself equal to the height of his great argument. His theme must have so possessed him, so filled his whole being, that, as we say, he must have become inspired with it, impelled to give it that large utterance in language worthy of it, to find expression for it in accordance with the dignity of human life.

Mere literary skill is but a small part of the equipment of a great writer. Cleverness and brilliance are most frequently the marks of lesser men. "A sad sincerity," in Emerson's phrase, is the more authentic seal of the great writers. They builded better than they knew. They were instructive "vessels," understanding but little of their own creative process, rather than self-conscious artists, viewing their material from the outside.

That is where the man of talent differs from the man of genius. The man of talent can do many things, more or less impar-

tially, whereas your man of genius, though he, too, may be many-sided, is preeminently gifted to do one thing—chosen by it, so to speak, rather than himself choosing. He is so obsessed by some vision of the world, some truth or beauty he must embody, that its embodiment becomes paramount with him, the one sacred thing he was born to do, nothing short of his very life. Such men have been the great religious writers, the great poets, the great philosophers, the great dramatists, the great humorists, the great tellers of tales.

In the case of the most universal books, their writers are seen to write less as individuals than as the representative mouthpiece of a race or a nation—sometimes, it would almost seem, as the voice of the very World Spirit itself, or the voice of universal humanity. Such writers were the men who made the Bible, and all such sacred books; and such, too, in varying degrees were Homer and Æschylus, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Burns.

THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF BOOKS

The place of books in the life of man is becoming, year by year, of graver importance, for the reason that the world at large is becoming more and more intellectually conscious. The masses, so called, are more and more doing their own thinking, and it therefore becomes a paramount matter that that thinking should not be done in a hurry, or under the influence of shallow or narrow minds, but that it should be nourished on the broadest knowledge of life and of the wisdom so far distilled from it by the sincerest, most serious, and most gifted of its students. Never was there a time when the widest dissemination of the knowledge of " the best that has been done and thought in the world " was, one might even say, so tragically necessary; for the reason that so much half-baked thinking and writing gets so wide a distribution, that cheap and flashy modernity too often chokes and poisons educational channels, and feeds with unprofitable and deleterious substitutes the wide-spread democratic appetite for knowledge.

A return to any censorship of books is, of course, impossible, though as a matter of fact there still operates a limited censorship over certain types of literature regarded as violating decency or as dangerous to morals. Failing a general censorship, one cannot but wish for the institution of some central advisory authority in this important matter. If the state may no longer condemn and prohibit, one can conceive at least of its advising and warning, and thus in some degree directing the democratic book-hunger toward the best instead of leaving it ignorantly to feed on cheap intellectual hash, and to dose itself with dangerous patent medicines.

A food-director of the mind! That, I suppose, is a dream; and the same low standards of demand and supply which so disastrously rule the theater must continue to prevail in the world of books, and the problem must work itself out as best it may in the haphazard welter of an evolution left to itself, in which we can but hope that the finer elements may some day prevail. Yet it seems a pity that a man, say, capable of enjoying Shakespeare should find his only nourishment on the windy victuals of a Bernard Shaw, or that one able to appreciate Gilbert and Sullivan should be offered modern musical comedy in its place; that the hungry sheep, looking up, should be fed on skim-milk philosophers and tenth-rate novelists, with Plato and Emerson there dusty on the shelf, and Scott and Dickens and Balzac and Tolstoy much more to their well-being and even to their taste, if there was only some one to let them know.

Those detractors of the classics and the " standard authors " who attribute their longevity to superstitious reverence for the past are themselves the victims of another superstition far more mischievous—that superstition of novelty which assumes that the present must always be an improvement on the past. No very profound study of history is necessary to realize that this is far from being true. Many things, indeed, have been done perfectly in the past that are done very imperfectly in the present. There are lost or degenerated arts of life which we would do well to recover or regenerate.

BOOKS ARE THE RECORD OF THE PAST

Moreover, the present is always wasting its time by trying experiments which the past has long since tried and found illusory, and it is the knowledge of these old failures that accounts for the discouraging lack of enthusiasm with which the panaceas and utopian schemes of young idealists and half-educated revolutionists are regarded by older and better-furnished heads. And

no illusion of humanity would seem to be more permanent than that which is continually asking to be shown a new thing. A new thing may be a good thing, and frequently is so, but it is not so because it is new. It may mark a genuine advance, but the notion that the present is necessarily an advance upon the past is a misleading error, retarding to the best elements in civilization. True culture, while it keeps an open and welcoming mind for the developments of the present, is rightly conservative of the achievements of the past.

And of these achievements literature is the great record and storehouse. The present is only the past with variations, and these variations must necessarily be slight, so long as the staple of human nature, and the universe of which it is a part, remain practically unchanged. Stars and mountains and seas, and the laws controlling the natural world, are the same to-day as when the first scientists and philosophers studied them, and the first poets sang them; and man with his passions and joys and sorrows, his dreams and humors, has not changed a whit since Homer and the Greek dramatists drew their first pictures of him. And the modes of literature itself have not changed in three thousand years.

"No new genre has been invented since the days of Plato," says one who speaks with authority, Dr. James Fitzmaurice Kelly. "The evolution of literature is completed in Greece, and there its subdivisions may best be studied."

There can be little question that the men who did things first in literature did them best, though every succeeding age has made its characteristic additions to the great and good books of the world, and few centuries or races have failed to enrich mankind with some valuable expression of their own individual way of embodying and interpreting the facts and problems of human life.

In these remarks I must not be misunderstood as being merely a praiser of past times, nor would I have every one follow the example of Lamb, who said that whenever a new book came out, he read an old one—though, while so many better old books remain unread, it is an example worth keeping in mind. We have a natural interest, one might say a family interest, in the books of our own time. They have a contemporary tang and accent which give them an immediacy and piquancy of appeal—and there is always a chance that they may be really good literature, and even great. To ignore present-day poetry because greater poetry is already on our shelves would be at least ungracious toward our contemporaries; but to limit ourselves, as some of our young poetic futurists say we should, to the poetry of the twentieth century, would hardly, at the most generous estimate of that poetry, acquaint us with the full capacity of poetic art, or quite account for the place taken by poetry in the history of the human spirit.

It would, indeed, be a pity to miss the "Spoon River Anthology," but it would be a still greater pity to be ignorant of the great odes and sonnets of Wordsworth, as I am sure Mr. Masters would be the first to agree. And however skilled and attractive, and even serious, certain contemporary novelists may be, it is surely our loss if our knowledge of imaginative literature is limited to them.

"We are mighty clever fellows nowadays," said Stevenson, "but we cannot write like Hazlitt."

Without doubt we *are* mighty clever fellows, but, all the same, idle sneers at the Victorian era apart, there is no writer living, man or woman, who measures up with the great writers of the nineteenth century, to go no farther back than that.

AN ERA OF SPECIALIZATION

Our great danger at the present time, owing to the increasing stress and complexity of existence, is that we do not live either deeply or broadly enough. We are too specialized in our interests, and the old adage that it takes nine tailors to make a man applies no longer only to the sartorial profession, but to mankind in general. We tend less and less to be complete men, as our fathers more often were, but are too often merely sections of manhood.

"Reading," said Bacon, "maketh a full man," and it is that conception of the "full man" that modern society needs very seriously to keep before it as the ideal citizen of our evolving democracy. As it is, we are too much in the nature of complementary units, one helpless without the other. Instead of taking all life for our province, we limit our interests to our immediate activities, and become more and more manufacturers and salesmen of this or that material commodity, or specialists in this or that

isolated branch of knowledge, and less and less complete men.

Our lives, indeed, are more and more immersed in the various machinery of keeping alive, and all too little concerned about those matters for which alone it is worth while being alive at all—that is, life itself. We are so occupied in providing for life—for our livelihood, as we say—that we never live. Instead of our businesses being the means to life, we make them its end; and the mysterious opportunity for a noble and various experience that we call life is wasted upon us. We live without any deep sense of the marvel and glory of living, unaware of what it means, or ought to mean, to have been born man and woman, curiously heedless of our mysterious significance, and strangely unimpressed by the magic universe which surrounds and infolds us with its beauty and awe.

Robert Louis Stevenson, in one of his essays, has a deep and illuminating phrase of wide application in this regard. He describes some dull business folk talking with undue seriousness of their dull business; and he adds, "as if it were real, like laughter."

As if it were real, like laughter! Fully to understand what Stevenson means by that is to have a proper appreciation of the real values of human existence, those elemental activities and satisfactions of our being that make the life of a full man. And, as Bacon said, it is the primary service of great books to educate us in those values, to universalize the individual with a knowledge of the whole of life, as it has been most largely and deeply and fruitfully lived, and with a knowledge, too, of the accumulated thought concerning it by the wisest heads and most richly endowed natures among mankind.

> Oh, blessed Letters, that combine in one
> All ages past, and make one live with all.

The great books of the world live because each one, in its particular sphere, has made a contribution toward the attainment of this general culture. It has contributed to our knowledge of natural laws, or has advanced fruitful interpretative theories of existence, or has given inspiring expression to the phenomena of the world about us, or has embodied humanity in all its multifarious types—its joys and sorrows and humors—and so presented and interpreted man to himself, or has in some other way quickened man's sense of the significance, the value, and thrill of his existence, the divine opportunity and the divine responsibility of his being.

THE MOLDERS OF HUMAN THOUGHT

In the works of those great men who first pondered the riddle of the universe, and the mystery of man's soul, one still feels the creative accent of a veritable *fiat lux*. "Let there be light," they said:

> And lo, creation widened to man's view.

The thought of such men as Plato and Aristotle literally went to make the world, and still goes on making it. Most subsequent thinking has come out of one or the other. Had there been no Plato, there had been no Emerson; and, speaking of Aristotle, Dr. Bury says:

> It is not an overstatement to say that there is no one to whom Europe owes a greater debt for the higher education of her peoples than to Aristotle. The science of the laws of thought is still taught mainly as he first worked it out. There are no better introductions to ethical and political speculation than his fundamental treatises on ethical and political science.

Nor have man's speculations on the nature of his own soul and his spiritual destiny ever found so noble a spokesman, or such lovely expression, as with Plato in the "Phædo." And, in the realm of physical science, such sublime guesses at truth as those of Lucretius in the august Latin of his "De Rerum Natura," have a permanent value independent of how right or wrong they were. While later knowledge confirms some, and discards others, the attitude of that great scientific poet, as he directs his solemn, searching gaze beyond "the flaming walls of the world," is in itself an inspiration. Such first voyages among the stars carry with them that same breath of awe before the unknown that we feel in the narratives of the early explorers of unsailed seas and new continents. As Matthew Arnold has finely said:

> What bard
> At the height of his vision, can deem
> Of God, of the world, of the soul,
> With a plainness as near,
> As flashing, as Moses felt
> When he lay in the night by his flock
> On the starlit Arabian waste?
> Can rise and obey
> The beck of the spirit like him?

There is the special value to the spirit of the first great poets. We feel that through

them the world is beholding its own wonder for the first time. There is an immediacy and freshness about their very words which only the greatest of later poets ever recapture. One epithet in Homer—and the same applies to the Bible—is often worth a world of later adjectives. The dawn has been wonderfully described over and over again since Homer's day, but what subsequent "nature poet" has approached in effectiveness that one simple phrase, when at the end of the description, filled with the starry glitter of night, of the Trojan warriors around their camp-fires, waiting for the morning attack, he tells how "the horses champed white barley and spelt, and standing by their chariots waited for *the throned Dawn*"?

One cannot too often emphasize the fact that the appeal of great books is not primarily, or necessarily, to the reason. They were not written to convey information, but to stir the deeper activities of the spirit. To us to-day their themes may be comparatively unimportant in themselves, or their subject-matter mythical, or merely symbolical, but their value is none the less for that. The Peloponnesian War, for instance, may seem a small and remote affair to us nowadays, and much of Greek and later history, local and miniature; but, treated by great historians like Thucydides, the essential human importance of such struggles is so impressively brought before us that they provide exemplars of man's heroic qualities that remain an inspiration for all time.

Great deeds do not need a large stage, just as "great verse," as Keats has expressed it, has usually been left "unto a little clan." Similarly, there have been larger battles than Bunker Hill, but few have meant more to mankind. The greatness, the splendid seriousness of human life, the valor and ideal possibilities of men and women—there lies the business of the great poets and the great epic historians.

As some great books live because they thus interpret and inspire, others live because they delight and console. They bring us beauty and laughter. Some poets, such as John Keats, for example, see the world almost entirely in terms of beauty. That, to them, is a sort of beatific vision to which they would constantly direct our eyes.

"If you get plain beauty," says Browning, "you get about the best thing that God invents."

Therefore such poets aim to bring us in their beauty-steeped poems that "joy forever" which we find in the lovely things of nature or in concrete objects of art—a vase or a statue. Other poets, such as Aristophanes and Shakespeare, combine that vision of beauty with great-hearted laughter. Man's life is serious and beautiful, but there is in it something irresistibly humorous, strangely mixed up, too, with tragedy and pathos; and they blend in their work these various elements as they are blended in life itself.

Other great poets, like Æschylus, Dante, Milton, and Wordsworth, see life as a vision of the moral law, as a struggle between good and evil in the human soul, or between man's life and an inscrutable destiny.

Romancers and novelists, with a more immediate purpose to delight and distract, embody all varieties of the human spectacle and the human story, holding up a mirror to the multifariousness of life, often combining the poet and philosopher with the teller of tales.

One perhaps might sum up these general remarks on the life-principle in great books by some such tabulation as the following: Great books live because—

First, they embody in the most masterly way, or for the first time, some form of reality, either of the physical world, or the world of human nature; natural facts and natural laws; man's spiritual and intellectual aspirations, attitudes, and discoveries. Such are the great books of religion, philosophy, and science.

Second, they preserve the memory of great events and great personalities, and so interpret, inspire, and instruct humanity. Such are the great books of history and biography.

Third, they inspire, sustain, or charm us by the embodiment of lofty thoughts and dreams, and by the beauty of picture-making or musical words. Such are the great books of poetry and imaginative literature generally.

Fourth, because of their general embodiment of human nature—man, with his universal characteristics, feelings, joys, and sorrows, manners and humors. Such are the great books of dramatists, novelists, and essayists.

Fifth, because they place before us to the life one human being—such as Michel de Montaigne, Dr. Samuel Johnson, or Charles Lamb.

Recalled

BY TOM SHIRAS

Illustrated by F. McAnelly

FOR a young man who was a gentleman, a scholar, and a philosopher, with a staid, meek manner on which he prided himself, the Rev. James Gray, who was filling his first charge in Ruddellsville, was acting strangely this morning.

As he came down the yard walk leading from the Regan residence, a half-block up the street from the Triggs bungalow, and passed out of the gate to the shady walk, starting toward the village square, Mary Triggs—widow of the late departed John Triggs, former owner of the Ruddellsville Flour and Feed Store—who was watching him from the west window in her living-room, became visibly agitated. It was evident that for some reason he had lost his self-control, for he was advancing slowly, with an unsteady gait. It was plain to Mary, as she watched him rolling along, that the part of his brain which acted as a rudder for his legs was either adrift or engrossed in performing other duties more important than guiding footsteps. And yet Ruddellsville was a moral town—a town in which such a vice as intoxication was not tolerated.

As he drew nearer to a point on the street directly across from her home, Mary changed her post of observation to the front window. As she caught a glimpse of his tortured face, she felt a slight pang of reproach for allowing the suspicion she had at first entertained to enter her mind. It was plain that spirituous liquor was not responsible for his condition, but rather a mental shock.

She drew back from the window to the center of the room, where she stood for a moment all in a flutter, biting her lips, thinking fast, with her chubby arms akimbo. Then she darted to the west window again, threw a glance at the Regan home, and discovered that she was not the only one observing the Rev. James Gray with interest that morning. Anne Regan stood on the veranda watching him disappear into the shady perspective of the street.

Mary drew back from the window hurriedly after she had arrived at a solution of the problem, shaking her head up and down knowingly.

"So Anne Regan is the woman in the case!" she muttered to herself, as she went back to the kitchen.

II

As Anne watched the massive, compact figure, clothed in black alpaca, move slowly up the street in downcast attitude, an expression of displeasure, mingled with the little shadows cast by the wistaria-vines, played on her face. All her life she had associated black alpaca with people in their dotage, and James Gray's broad shoulders seemed ridiculously out of place, covered by his loose-fitting black alpaca coat. No difference if obstinate little aches tugged at her heart as she watched him. She prided herself that she had passed the silly age and could glimpse life from the practical as well as the sentimental side.

In her younger days Anne had dreamed of Jimmy Gray developing into a big man, a man with broad ideas, who would be the dominating force in the community in which he lived. Later, when he entered college to study for the ministry, she beheld him as pastor of some large church—a man of the day, whose influence for good would be far-reaching.

But Jimmy Gray hadn't measured up to her dreams. The power of leadership that he used to show on the diamond and the gridiron had lapsed into meek submissiveness. He seemed smugly satisfied with everything—an attitude which did not fit into Anne's scheme of things at all.

She had censured him for letting this new view of life grow upon him. He had

pleaded his profession. He was now a humble servant in the house of the Lord, and it was proper.

Anne had always supposed that she would marry him; but somehow, earlier in the morning, when he had sat by her side on the veranda in the pleasant shade cast by the wistaria-vines and pressed his suit, other than sentimental thoughts had flooded her mind.

Anne had rubbed frayed elbows with genteel poverty all her life, and to go on through life under the same depressing influence was not a pleasant prospect to contemplate. By the most optimistic calculus of differences she could not see how she could stretch the young clergyman's salary of six hundred dollars a year over twelve long months. Her mind also dwelt upon the parsonage, with its leaky roof, the dilapidated fence which enclosed it, and the decrepit outbuildings in the back yard. In this depressing setting she beheld herself a few years hence, the mother of a large family of children, wrinkled, overworked, broken in body and spirit; and she refused to enter.

When she rejected him, kindly but firmly, he did not seem to take her refusal seriously, opposing her stand in a conciliatory manner. In the end she had to tell him positively, and in doing so gave vent to all her pent-up thoughts on the subject. She told him of the dreams she had had of him as a boy, and how he had disappointed her. She expressed her disapprobation of his present views on life and of the course he was pursuing.

When she had finished he understood, and he accepted her decision as a man accepts a mortal blow. He was not fain to confess that as a philosopher he had been a failure, for at least one woman presented a complex question. He became suddenly aware that he loved Anne, that she was the most important factor that had ever entered his life, and that he had lost her.

III

When he left the Regan home, the young minister's steps turned almost unconsciously to the church, where he had labored, satisfied, for nine months to awaken a lethargic congregation. It was quite natural for him to seek spiritual consolation and strength within its cool walls.

Little puffs of dust arose from the jute matting as he walked up the aisle, and his footsteps returned a barely audible echo. Determining to seek strength of spirit in prayer, he laid his straw fedora on the altar with trembling hands, and started to kneel and bow his head.

As he assumed an attitude of devotion, he caught sight of two contribution-boxes, lined with frayed plush, standing beside the organ. Last Sunday, at the morning service, the one on the right had contained ninety-seven cents, and the one on the left forty-eight cents.

James Gray's mind refused to turn to things spiritual. He began to think of more worldly matters. Regardless of his freshly pressed alpaca trousers and the accumulation of dust on the platform, he sat down, crossed his legs in front of him, and chewed a toothpick in nervous thought.

A flock of pigeons in the belfry set up a peaceful cooing; his mind became calm and his thoughts clear. In the subdued morning light that filtered through the marred surfaces of the imitation stained-glass windows, he viewed the empty pews of his congregation; and suddenly, like ghosts, their figures rose before him in lifelike clearness, as at Sunday morning service.

There was Deacon Anthony Smith, a thin-visaged, small, elderly man, with a sparse sprinkling of gray on his partly bald head, nodding in his pew. Across the aisle was Mary Triggs, absorbed in her thoughts of some local scandal. He could hear the organist whispering to the choir, and the low, fretful murmur of a half-score of tired children. He saw the yawning mouths and stretching arms of the bored congregation, as they rose to sing the last hymn, and heard the very audible sigh of relief as he finished the benediction.

A feeling of repugnance swept over him. Anne's poignant, plain-spoken words came rushing into his mind, and he confessed to himself, as he sat there, that she was right. He had lost his old-time youthful personality. He was a failure as a minister of the Gospel; just a piece of floating driftwood. Feeling this, he came to the conclusion that it was hardly fair to his parishioners to take a salary from them any longer.

Then a grim determination swept over him. He decided to leave Ruddellsville, for the very atmosphere of the village had become odious to him and stifled him. To meet Anne day after day under the new conditions would be impossible. He would leave to-day, on the afternoon train.

He arose, brushed the dust from his clothes, and made his way to the parsonage. As he entered his bachelor quarters, he smiled with irony at the wash-bowl he had set on the floor the day before to catch the water as it dripped through the roof during a shower. He scowled at the dirty, frayed wall-paper. Dropping down at his desk, he hurriedly penned his resignation, took it to the post-office, and, after giving the drayman instructions about his trunk, returned to pack and take a last look around.

He sat down on the edge of the bed with his hands clasped about his knees,

SUDDENLY, LIKE GHOSTS, THEIR FIGURES ROSE BEFORE HIM IN LIFELIKE CLEARNESS, AS AT SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

and planned his future. He would go to the town where he had doffed his football clothes for the last time, and would seek employment as a clerk, office man, salesman, porter, watchman—anything that would afford employment at a living wage. His heart gave an anguished wrench at the thought. In a few short hours all his years of study and careful training had gone for naught.

A lump rose in his throat and tears sprang into his eyes as he nibbled unconsciously at his shirt-sleeves. Then he slipped to the floor on his knees and prayed—prayed that his footsteps might be guided into the right channel; prayed for self-confidence; prayed that he might be allowed to remain in the service of the Lord for the good of humanity.

He arose calm in mind and strengthened in spirit, dressed himself carefully, threw the last few things into his trunk, and dragged it out on the porch for the drayman, who had just driven up to the gate.

As he walked down the main street toward the station, he saw Anthony Smith approaching. His first impulse was to avoid him by slipping down a side street; then his new-born confidence asserted itself, and he walked boldly up to him.

"I am leaving to-day, deacon. I've been thinking things over this morning, and have decided that as pastor of your church I am a flat failure. You will find my resignation in the post-office," he said nervously.

A look of incredulity rippled over the old gentleman's face, and he peered at Gray in astonishment over his spectacles.

"Leaving!" he shouted in amazement. "Leaving the church without a pastor? Gracious me, gracious me! Running off without giving us proper notice, without preaching a farewell sermon, without even a decent good-by!" he spluttered.

"Yes, deacon, I'm going," Gray said with a trembling voice. "I'm going to leave these mountains, and the town and the people that I love. I was being paid for something that I was not delivering, and I didn't think it fair to the congregation. Kansas City is my destination, and I just heard the train whistle for the crossing. Good-by"—and he grasped the old man's hand and wrung it warmly, then dashed for the station.

IV

THE city noises were bewildering to James Gray as he stepped from the big station out into the street. He stopped for an instant and likened them to the confusion of Babel; then he sauntered slowly along, seeking a place of rest and shelter for the night.

He realized that he was in the rougher part of the city. A multitude of barroom signs swung boldly over the street, flashing names in colored lights; pianos poured forth rag-time, and coarse jokes floated from the interiors. He stopped in front of a movie show to scan a sensational poster, and sighed. An honest sorrow filled his heart, for God seemed to have no place in this scene of moral depravity.

And then he stopped in eager attitude. His ears had caught a familiar sound, and he listened in rapt attention. The ballyhoo barked at him from the depths of the lobby, but he did not hear. Far up the street in the next block, above all the worldly noises, his keen ears caught the soft sound of voices singing, and the faint strains of a wheezy organ playing "Bringing in the Sheaves."

He walked up the street with a quickened, eager pace. The singing became louder. As he peered eagerly ahead, he saw a sign swung across the walk in front of a small, one-story building—a dimly lighted sign which read:

THIRD STREET MISSION

As he stepped to the door and hurriedly glanced around before entering, the organ stopped suddenly. There was a scrambling among that part of the little congregation that was seated in the center of the hall, and those behind arose and craned their necks in curiosity.

A big man, roughly dressed and in his cups, had arisen, and blasphemous words fell from his thick tongue. A woman screamed in fear as she made her way to the aisle that led to the door. The speaker on the platform tried to quiet the disturber, but his mild words were hurled back at him in curses.

A shudder ran up James Gray's back as he listened. This man was blaspheming God, in God's own house!

He made up his mind instantly, and without further hesitancy entered the door and started down the aisle. The commotion stopped as he walked slowly toward the disturber with unruffled countenance and calm demeanor, and entered the circle that had so suddenly opened around the man. The room became hushed, the very atmosphere was charged with pending danger.

"Be careful, mister—that's Battling Brown!" a man cautioned the newcomer as he advanced.

The name had an ominous sound; danger seemed to be lurking in every syllable.

But Gray stepped up to the man fearlessly, put his hand kindly on his shoulder, and addressed him in a voice filled with a spirit of meekness.

"Brother, do not blaspheme God in God's own house. It is irreverent and sacrilegious. Drunkenness, too, is a sin. Kneel and pray with me for forgiveness."

Battling Brown, interrupted in his blasphemous tirade, wheeled on the intruder, aflame with drunken anger.

"Leggo my shoulder, you meddlin' sky-pilot!" he hurled at Gray with blazing eyes, making a lunge at him with his right.

James Gray dodged quickly, but Battling Brown's big fist connected with his face in a glancing blow that broke the skin and brought blood.

A strange feeling came over him as he backed away with the blood running down his cheek. The heavy blow of the drunken lout burned on his face, and, strange to say, Anne's words rushed into his mind and stung him. His meek spirit of uprightness and submissiveness had been trampled on. His staid and imperturbable manner had been insulted. His big gray eyes snapped fire.

Impelled by an overmastering desire to

NOT WAITING FOR EXPLANATIONS OR INTERFERENCE, GRAY DASHED FORWARD, CAUGHT THE GASPING MAN BY THE COLLAR, DRAGGED HIM TO THE DOOR, AND DUMPED HIM INTO THE STREET

chastise the man who had struck him, he deftly sidestepped another vicious blow, feinted with his left, and, with his whole body and soul behind his right, drove it like a pile-driver straight to his adversary's chin. Brown fell in a crumpled mass across a pile of overturned benches.

Not waiting for explanations or interference, Gray dashed forward, caught the gasping man by the collar, dragged him to the door, and dumped him into the street.

As he turned around, he noticed that the congregation was rising and starting out.

"Sit down!" he commanded.

His attitude and voice were compelling, and the people turned and dropped back into their seats. He felt himself master of the situation; felt the old dominant spirit of youth come surging over him.

"We will continue this service by singing 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul,'" he said.

Catching the impelling look that flashed from his eyes, the little organist, who had been in a panic, and who was still shaking with fright, turned to the organ and started to play. The minister in charge of the service looked surprised but pleased, and the congregation rose to its feet.

"Sing!" James Gray shouted. "Sing loud! Let this avenue of ungodliness know that the servants of the Lord are on the job here!"

The congregation caught his spirit, and the mission vibrated with a great volume of vocal harmony that flowed from the souls of the singers. People passing on the street stopped, looked in, and lingered. Habitués of the street, attracted by the unusual enthusiasm, gathered about the door, and, catching the infectious spirit of the meeting, crowded in.

As the hymn drew to a close, Gray dropped down in the dirty aisle on his knees and prayed. He prayed fervently and earnestly; prayed for the denizens of the street as they had never been prayed for before; prayed for the whole congregation; prayed for the man he had whipped;

prayed for the whole world, and for himself. His heart was full, and his prayer was eloquent. Tears chased down the cheeks of men soaked in strong drink and sin, and women sobbed audibly.

"I will take my text to-night from Proverbs, eighteenth chapter, ninth verse—'He that is slack in his work is brother to him who is a destroyer,'" he announced as he rose.

Pacing up and down the aisle, exhorting, commanding, and pleading, he delivered his message. He felt his strength and power as he had never felt them before. Words carrying wisdom and truth leaped magically to his tongue, and sank deep into the hearts of his listeners. For an hour he held them spellbound and repentant; then he spread out his arms and pronounced the benediction.

Eyes sunken with despair gleamed bright with hope and tears; men wrung his hands, and women clung to his arms. He was overcome with a feeling of great happiness. Gladness filled his heart, and tears of joy welled in his eyes. The little pastor of the mission grasped him kindly by the arm and took him home.

For three nights James Gray preached to overflowing congregations at the little mission. Then they swamped it, and he was tendered the use of one of the largest churches in the city in which to continue his meetings.

V

ENTIRELY ignorant of the havoc she had created in the life of the Rev. James Gray, with pangs of remorse for her hasty action playing a doleful tune on her heartstrings, Anne Regan was preparing vegetables for the evening meal on the day of his departure when she saw Mary Triggs come bustling through the front gate.

"You poor, dear child!" Mary crooned sympathetically, as she threw her arms around Anne at the front door and kissed her.

Anne shuddered at the quivering impact and hastily withdrew from the embrace.

"Why are you so suddenly sympathetic, Mary?" she asked, smiling.

"You poor child, haven't you heard? He's gone."

"Any one I know, Mary?" Anne questioned with a note of apprehension in her voice.

"It's Jim Gray. I guess he is a friend of yours. He went without a good-by, without a civil word or a farewell sermon—went bag and baggage on the afternoon train."

With keen satisfaction Mary watched Anne's face turn white and her lips tremble. The tragedy was a rare piece of gossip.

"Well, Mary, didn't he have a right to go?" Anne answered weakly.

"Not in any such fashion, Anne Regan. He will rue his act, too! A general meeting of the congregation has been called for to-night to act on his case, and it won't be long after the bishop hears of it until he is expelled from the ministry."

She turned away, self-satisfied, and started home.

That evening Anne sat on the veranda by herself, in brooding silence. She tried to console herself with the thought that she had acted wisely, and that her contention was right, but an intense feeling of loneliness stole over her. Jim used to drop in and chat with her. Sitting alone, she looked into a future without him. Good old Jim! She had sent him away hopeless, with a broken heart.

The church bell began to ring—the bell in the belfry of Jim's old church. It was clanging Jim's ostracism. Its tones became odious mockery to Anne. In a few minutes his career and reputation would be led to the block and the executioner would swing the ax. It was all her fault, all her fault!

She heard the swish of dresses and the low murmur of voices, as people passed by the house on their way to church. It would be a full congregation, for it was an epoch in the church annals of Ruddellsville. No minister had ever deserted his post before.

Suddenly a wild impulse flashed into Anne's mind. She would go to the meeting, to attend the last sad rites performed over Jim's career as a minister.

Bitter thoughts flew through her mind as she hastened up the street, resentfully upbraiding herself for her action. What was genteel poverty compared to love? She had deliberately ruined the reputation of the man she loved. She had not been sure of it that morning, but she was now.

She stopped an instant as she reached the parsonage, and in the soft moonlight viewed the dilapidated panel-fence, the gate that hung on one hinge, the warped shingles on the roof, and the decrepit front

porch. They had no terrors for her now. She would have given a whole life of drudgery to be sitting on that porch in the moonlight with Jim, as Jim's wife, no matter what the surrounding conditions were.

When she arrived at the church, she slipped into the vestibule and crouched in the dark shadows. She heard the congregation, one by one, arise and denounce the action of the man she loved; and bitter resentment and indignation filled her heart. Deacon Smith was finally appointed as a committee of one to take the matter up with the bishop by letter.

The deacon spent two whole days framing the epistle of accusation. On the morning of the third day he entered his office with a sigh of relief, and flopped down to put his thoughts on paper.

As he poised his pen for action, his eyes fell for an instant on the glaring head-lines of a city newspaper, which had just arrived and was lying on his desk. An exclamation of surprise burst from his thin lips. The pen went clattering to the floor unnoticed, and he eagerly picked up the paper.

VI

In the mean time the Rev. James Gray had fully made up his mind in regard to Anne. He had determined to run down to Ruddellsville soon and tell her a few things. He wanted her to know of his awakened ambition, his newly acquired self-confidence, his determination, his impulse to lead. If she had any other foolish notions about what he ought or ought not to be, he would just bundle her up in his arms and walk off with her in spite of any protest she might make.

He thought of her continually, and as he reviewed the entire situation he became aware that he had associated her in some way with every sermon he had preached. Her goodness and the sweet freshness of her ambitious young womanhood, aye, and her words of rebuke and censure, had been the inspiration that had awakened his ambition, had raised him in a few short days from hopeless mediocrity to a position of power, had made of him an inspiring force for good.

It was the night of James Gray's tenth sermon in the city, his seventh at the big church out on the avenue, and it was nearly time for the sermon to begin. He could hear the hum of hundreds of voices, the muffled echo from the carpeted aisles, as the ushers seated the late arrivals. He picked up his Bible, clasped it in both hands in front of him, and stepped from the pastor's study into the pulpit.

As he surveyed the congregation, he caught sight of Battling Brown—a converted battler neatly dressed—occupying one of the front pews. Around him were other denizens of the street on which the little mission stood.

The clergyman announced the hymn and turned to the organist; then a stir at the door attracted his attention. He looked up as a multitude of voices swelled the anthem. As his eyes fell on the group following the usher up the aisle, an audible expression of surprise escaped him, and a shade of annoyance rippled over his countenance.

The first person behind the usher was Anthony Smith, the second was Mary Triggs, and behind them, like a flock of sheep, surging back and forth, immaculately garbed, came almost his entire Ruddellsville congregation. Back, away back by the door, he caught a glimpse of Anne—yes, of Anne, with a look of anxious uncertainty on her sweet young face.

His heart throbbed with ecstasy and love as he watched her. Then, as his eyes fell back on his old congregation, a firm resolve gripped him. He would preach a stinging sermon of rebuke. He would point out the duties man owed both to his God and to himself.

Fired by this new inspiration, he leaned over his pulpit and said:

"I will take my text to-night from Proverbs, twenty-eighth chapter, twenty-third verse—'He that rebuketh a man shall afterward find more favor than he that flattereth with his tongue.'"

The little neglected church in Ruddellsville, its irresponsive congregation, and his former meek, submissive self were silhouetted on his mind, and burning words of rebuke for the neglectful servants of the Lord fell from his lips. He likened them to the sleeping sentries and the slothful servants. He drew word-pictures of the dilatory drifters and the inattentive nodders. They were the drones, the unwatchful, the undependables. His words were eloquent and his phrases pertinent, fairly snapping with magnetic personality.

As the last notes of the organ blended into the low murmurings of the departing congregation, and the Rev. James Gray

stood at the foot of the pulpit, members of his old congregation crowded around him. Mary Triggs took his hand and wrung it fervently.

"You naughty boy, how could you run off and leave your old friends so—"

"Now, Mary," interposed the deacon, "you needn't catechize him. Jim, you preached a wonderful sermon to-night. Yes, my boy, it was an inspiring, uplifting, enlightening sermon. It took a two-hundred-mile trip to have you show us the light, but it has been worth

"NO, JIM, YOU WERE RIGHT! DRUDGERY, GENTEEL POVERTY, ANYTHING, JIM, BUT MENTAL MISERY. I HAVE BEEN SO VERY LONESOME AND MISERABLE WITHOUT YOU!"

the money. We've been driftwood, Jim—yes, sir, no better than driftwood, all of us, as you said. To-night is the first time during the last ten years that I haven't nodded in my pew. You are coming back to us, Jim?" he pleaded. "We need you."

James Gray was not at all attentive. His eyes were furtively wandering toward the rear of the church.

"Excuse me, deacon, just a minute," he said, and walked rapidly down the aisle.

Anne was standing quite alone. The congregation had brushed unceremoniously by her on its way out, and she seemed very insignificant as she stood there by herself and viewed it all. The mahogany balustrades, the marble wainscoting, and the cut-glass chandeliers awed her. Her mind reverted to Jim's sermon. Jim seemed to fit harmoniously into this mosaic setting of bigness, and she recognized in him to-night the Jim of her dreams.

She looked up and saw him coming toward her down the aisle. A little shiver of apprehension swept over her as she advanced to meet him.

"Anne!" he gulped.

"Jim!"

"I was wrong, Anne—oh, so very, very wrong!"

"No, Jim," the girl corrected him. "It was I who was wrong."

"I mean, Anne, about the drudgery, the leaky roof, and the meek, submissive spirit."

"No, Jim, you were right! Drudgery, genteel poverty, anything, Jim, but mental misery. I have been so very lonesome and miserable without you!"

"My dear," he answered, catching both her hands and pressing them tightly, "I am selfish enough to be glad!"

The janitor was starting to put out the lights. Jim's old congregation all came slowly up the aisle together, and they stopped just inside the vestibule.

The deacon put his hands on James Gray's shoulders.

"Jim, you will come back, won't you—back to Ruddellsville, when you get through with your meetings here? We're a lot of old fossils, I know, but some of us are rich old fossils. If we wanted to, I guess, we could build a church as fine as this. Come back to us, Jim, and name your own salary!"

An extremely gratifying smile flooded James Gray's countenance, and a mischievous light danced in his eyes.

"Personally, I cannot give you an answer. I will come willingly, if you can make the necessary arrangements with Mrs. Gray. We—Anne and I—are going to be married in the morning; but I warn you before you open negotiations with her that she is a very practical woman!"

THE COUNTRYMAN IN TOWN

When I, reluctant, come to town,
All countrified and country brown,
A little while my heart is strong,
Filled full of country faith and song;

Still the long hills are in my stride,
And brooks go running at my side,
And I can scarce the people see
For country sights 'twixt them and me;

Woodland vistas, upland meadows,
Orchards dappled thick with shadows,
And fantom fragrances drift sweet,
As though wild roses filled the street;

And, when the morning sounds begin,
My dreams make magic of their din,
And, half awake, I seem to hear
My little river singing clear.

Richard Leigh

The Wild Fawn*

A WIFE WHO BROUGHT GAY PARIS TO QUIET DIXIE LAND

By Mary Imlay Taylor

Author of "Who Pays?" "Children of Passion," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY R. L. LAMBDIN

XIX

COLONEL DENBIGH was reading the morning paper. He had breakfasted lightly, and he sat on the rear veranda smoking a long cigar. His face was troubled. He had a sincere friendship for the Carters, and he fairly twinged as he read the flaring head-lines. There were three columns devoted to the Corwin murder, with a snap-shot of Leigh being led from the court-house to the police van. Half-way down the first column there was an extra large caption to one paragraph:

MRS. WILLIAM CARTER, THE CAUSE OF THE TROUBLE, ONCE A BEAUTIFUL VAUDEVILLE DANCER

The colonel slapped his paper down on his knee with a groan.

"By gum!" he ejaculated softly.

Plato thrust his head out of the door.

"Miss Jinny don' want dat speckled hen killed fo' dinner to-morrer, suh."

The colonel's mouth twisted under his white mustache.

"Why not?"

"Miss Jinny, she's been makin' a pet ob her, yessuh. She say dat speckled hen ain't gwine to be killed, an' I kin take de rooster. Miss Jinny, she say she's fo' woman's rights, col'nel."

The colonel grinned sardonically.

"You get a steak, Plato. We've got to stand up for our own sex. I'm going to keep that rooster."

"Yessuh, dat we has!" Plato edged back toward the door as he heard Virginia coming. "Mis' Wilyum Carter done run away from her husband yes'day," he added in a stage whisper. "Mirandy, de girl dat works dere, done tole me so, yessuh!"

The colonel scowled.

"You tell Miranda to stop gossiping," he said sharply.

Plato grinned.

"Dat's woman's rights, yessuh. Mirandy says so!"

The colonel caught the old negro's eye and shook with silent laughter.

"Mind your own business, you old rogue!" he said shortly, resuming his paper.

He heard Plato's discreet retirement and then a frou-frou of skirts. Virginia, in the freshest of white gowns, came out. She was very pale, and there was a little line of worry between her brows.

"Anything new, grandpa?" she asked eagerly, looking at his newspaper. "Can they get Leigh out on bail?"

The colonel shook his head sadly.

"Think of a boy like that held for murder! Bless my soul, it seems as if it was only last year when I saw him in rompers and eating a lollypop. I remember perfectly—the stick was in his mouth and the lollypop all over his face. Good Lord! And he's shot a man!"

"He's such a nice boy," said Virginia. "He has such a sweet, dreamy face, and his eyes are beautiful. Haven't you noticed how he's grown up?"

"Yep!" the colonel snapped, frowning at space. "I did notice he was getting to be quite a young lady."

Virginia laughed musically.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" Then her face sobered. "I've just telephoned to

* Copyright, 1919, by Mary Imlay Taylor—This story began in the September number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE

Mrs. Carter—I mean Mrs. Johnson Carter," she explained, blushing suddenly; "and there doesn't seem to be anything that we can do."

The colonel nodded thoughtfully.

"I saw Dr. Barbour last night. He says there's nothing we can do."

Virginia looked thoughtfully across the green lawn toward the street. It was screened from view here by the colonel's horse-chestnut, but she glimpsed a strip of the street below the side gate. The sunlight, shining through the honeysuckle on the veranda, flashed on her white gown with glorification, as if it shouted halleluiah, and it shone, too, in her clear eyes. The colonel, who was watching her, thought her the loveliest thing on earth.

"I'm afraid there's a terrible time down there," she remarked regretfully. "I mean at the Carters'."

The colonel assented. He was thinking. He dreaded to tell her.

"Jinny, Plato says that—"

He got no further; she had uttered a soft exclamation and gone down the steps.

"There's Dan, grandpa!" she said in evident surprise.

The colonel watched her go on to meet Daniel Carter, and he saw the change in the young man's face as they met on the lawn. Daniel was very pale, and he limped badly to-day.

"By gum!" said the colonel below his breath. "I wonder if she knows! Women don't like weakness, I'm afraid. Nothing that's been winged appeals to them—not really. Girls like to imagine demigods. And that poor boy's breaking his heart for her, by gum!"

Meanwhile, Virginia turned with Daniel, and they came toward the veranda. The colonel rose and descended the steps.

"Dan," he said in a hoarse voice, holding out his hand, "if there's anything that I can do—"

Daniel shook his head, the muscles of his white face twitching a little from weariness and pain.

"Nothing at all, colonel except—to feel for us!"

"Come and sit with us on the piazza," suggested Virginia. "Can't you, Dan?"

He shook his head.

"I've got to go on to the office and then over—to the jail. I was passing—I had to stop to say 'howdy,' as Plato would express it. Mother's been ill in bed since yesterday. She wanted me to thank you both for the flowers and for your messages."

"Flowers and messages are mighty poor substitutes for deeds," rejoined the colonel bluntly. "You know I'll go bail for Leigh, if you wish it."

"Mr. Payson did that at once, thank you. We had Leigh out to see mother, but we couldn't keep reporters away from him, and we thought it best for him to go back to jail for the present. You see, he wants to go to Fanchon, to express his championship and all that. It's a hard situation, colonel, any way we can fix it. Leigh's been in a state of collapse, too—lost his nerve at first."

"He's nothing but a kid," said the colonel with indignation. "I—by gum, Dan, I don't like to say what I think!"

Virginia clapped a hand over his mouth.

"Not another word, grandpa!"

Daniel smiled.

"Never mind, Virginia, the newspapers are blatant. My father read the paper this morning and broke the cream-pitcher—the Wedgwood one, too."

The colonel caught Virginia's restraining hand and held it.

"Dan, how's William?"

Daniel, who was looking at Virginia, became very grave.

"I don't know how to answer that, colonel. He's heart-broken over Leigh, I think. He and his wife"—Daniel hesitated, his eyes on Virginia—"have separated," he concluded in a low voice.

The colonel, who knew it, only wagged his head soberly, but Virginia started. A deep blush rose from her throat to her white forehead. Her eyes fell before Daniel's, and he saw her hands tremble.

"She loves him still!" he thought bitterly.

He turned, looking paler than ever.

"I must go on. I only stopped to thank you both for your sympathy. We"—he hesitated again—"we appreciate it."

The colonel laid his hand on the younger man's shoulder, and his eyes misted.

"I'll walk to the street with you, Dan," he said, swallowing a lump in his throat. "I reckon there isn't much we can do—any of us—but to stand by you-all."

Daniel looked back at Virginia, raising his hat again, and the two men walked away across the long lawn to the group of cedars that grew by the side gate.

Virginia, left alone, turned and entered the house. She was very pale now, and her

"MIS' WILYUM CARTER DONE RUN AWAY FROM HER HUSBAND YES'DAY," PLATO ADDED IN A STAGE WHISPER

lips trembled. She went into the drawing-room and stood looking at the little old picture of William as a boy. She had looked at it a thousand times before, and she remembered that once she had kissed it. They had always been fond of each other, and then—or was it a dream?—he had asked her to marry him. They had planned their happiness gaily, with youthful laughter at sorrow and doubt. She had loved him, and he had married—this woman!

Virginia would have been less than human if she had not thrilled at the thought that he must regret it. She felt that he did. He had already almost said so. He had been caught; she knew it! What woman, placed as Virginia was, would not have felt that? In the rush of sympathy for him she blamed only Fanchon.

She remembered the night at the Sunday-school hall and Fanchon's blanched face at the sight of Corwin. Corwin had made Virginia shudder; but such men as this had been Fanchon's associates, such men as Corwin had been part of her life, and William Carter had unwittingly married her! In the storm of her resentment, Virginia felt only that William needed her sympathy, he even needed—it was on the tip of her tongue to say—her love!

Then the thing suddenly stood out before her; she saw it in all its horrible nakedness and cruelty. The poor little wayward dancer caught in the snare of her past—whatever that past might be—and suddenly, unfairly, in the midst of her fancied security, assailed and ruined, snatched from her new happiness, talked about, shamed, and at last cast out!

Yet—poor William! Tears rushed to Virginia's eyes. Her heart yearned over him. At that moment, when William was breaking with the wife that he had preferred to her, when he was crushed by the scandal that the woman had made of his life, Virginia forgave him.

She sank down on the piano-stool under his childish picture, and, covering her face with her hands, she wept—not for herself, as Fanchon had done, but for William. She

had fought hard to crush out her love for him, but at that moment she felt that she had not succeeded, that it was too strong for her, and she trembled.

She trembled at the thought of the look on his face when she had seen him last. She knew that he had come back to her. Virginia, who could not see into the future, still felt a thrill of terror at her heart. It was as if an invisible power walked with her, an invisible hand thrust her toward unforeseen perils and into unknown ways.

Strangely enough, too, in the midst of her emotion, the thought came to her, keenly and vividly—what would Dan think of it? And of her—Virginia? In some way, intuitively, for he had said nothing about it, she knew that Daniel's attitude toward Fanchon had changed. Something in the very intonation of his voice had told her that; yet he had announced the separation without comment, and had even appeared to assent to Colonel Denbigh's suppressed recognition of Fanchon's culpability.

Virginia, weeping for William, trembling at the thought that William's heart must have turned remorsefully to the memories of their innocent affection, nevertheless flushed at the thought that Daniel would be a witness, a bystander, at any drama that unrolled now in their lives. She had never thought of Daniel before as having any part between William and her, but now it was Daniel's judgment that mattered. Yet she loved William. She no longer attempted to deny that to herself, she could not—it was William who was suffering and shamed by the woman who had left him.

Virginia was softly wiping the tears from her eyes when she heard her grandfather coming back. She rose, looked hastily into the mirror, and, reassured by the face she saw there, went into the hall and met him.

"I thought you were going to walk all the way into town with Dan," she remarked casually.

The colonel shook his head.

"I only went to the corner. Jinny, the trial's to be next week. Judge Jessup has managed to rush it before the court adjourns this session. It seems Mrs. Carter can't bear the suspense, and I reckon the boy can't, either. I never did think Leigh had much grit—not even when he ate lollypops," he added grimly, eying Virginia.

"I know his poor mother has gone to pieces," she replied gently. "Emily told me as much. Poor Emily, she's cried so hard that paint won't help her white eyelashes now."

The colonel, who had discovered that Virginia had been crying herself, looked thoughtful. They turned and walked through the hall together to the staircase. Virginia started to ascend—she wanted to escape—but her grandfather had more news for her.

"Dan's a kind of clam," he observed after a moment's pause, "but I got something out of him. Fanchon has told him her story. He believes that it will help save Leigh. He's going to put her on the stand."

Virginia, leaning on the banisters, blushed again.

"I thought she'd left William," she said in a low voice.

"So she has—so she has; but Dan says she'll do anything to save Leigh. She seems to be fond of that fool kid. Got him under her thumb, I suppose, and then made him do her bidding. I reckon she'd better go on the stand. It's the only thing she can do. But, by gum, I'm sorry for Johnson Carter and his wife and Emily and Dan."

"And William," suggested Virginia softly.

"No!" thundered the colonel. "No! I'm not a mite sorry for that lummox—he went and married her! He—"

The old man stopped with his mouth open. Lucas, the negro driver, had just appeared at the back door, his arms full of green ears of corn.

"Been up de hill, suh," he explained genially, "an' Col'nel Colfax's son, he done send yo' all dis yere corn. Golden Bantam—dat's what he call it, same as dey calls dem lil no-account chickens."

"It looks small," said the colonel. "How about that horse? Did you like it, Lucas?"

"Yessuh, I like 'im, but he don' like me. He's very good horse, Polestar's grandson, but I reckon I scared ob ridin' him. Sam Bun, he Mist' Colfax's man—he say dat horse bit four men las' Saturday week."

"I don't want him," said Virginia, laughing. "Hear any news up there, Lucas? How's Miss Sally?"

"Gone to de springs, Miss Jinny. I did heah on de road back 'bout young Mis' Carter—de one dat done got Mist' Corwin shot. She stayin' up to Quantah's place."

"Eh?" The colonel stared. "Pretty poor place, isn't it, Lucas?"

"Sho' is, suh. Ain't noffin' dere now but de woman, Mis' Quantah, an' dat bughouse

boy ob hers. Dey sold de cow las' week to de butcher. Ain't no place fo' quality nohow. Yessuh, Mis' Wilyum Carter up dere now. She lef' Mist' Wilyum, or Mist' Wilyum lef' her, I don't know—"

"Lucas, you take that corn to the kitchen. I want some for dinner."

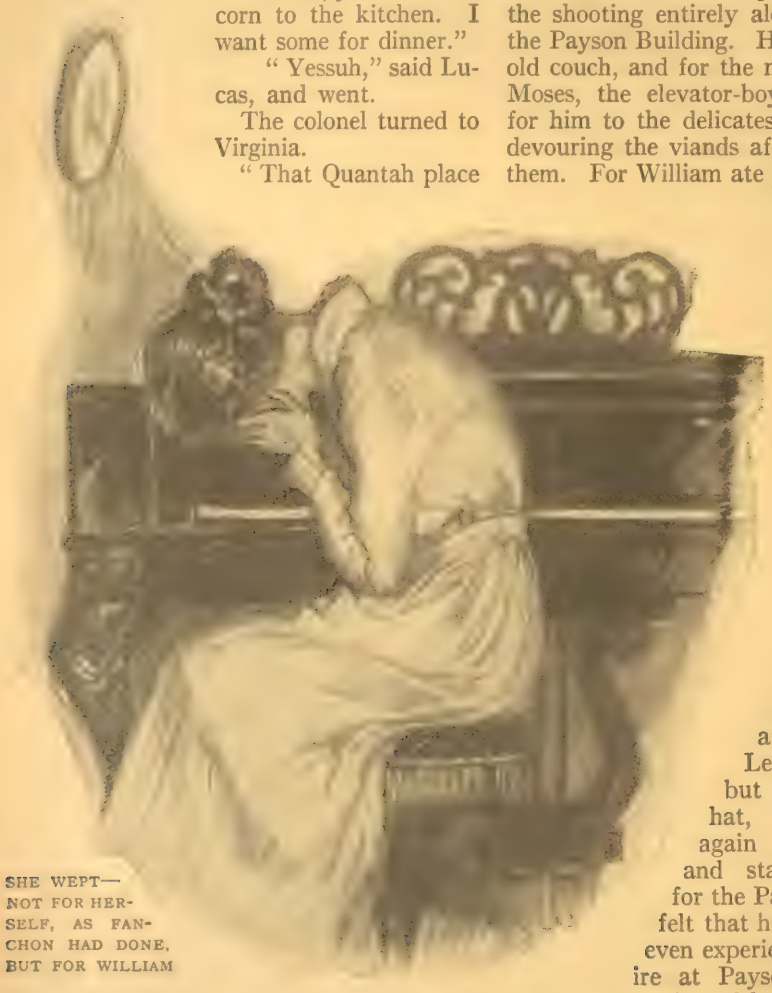
"Yessuh," said Lucas, and went.

The colonel turned to Virginia.

"That Quantah place is pretty forlorn. Can that girl be as poor as that? I thought Mrs. Quantah was about down and out."

"Why, grandpa, the place is a wreck! There can't be a decent room up-stairs!" Virginia's face was still flushed, she clung to the banisters. "I can't understand."

The colonel looked grave.

"She's going on the stand for Leigh. The Carters oughtn't to allow this." He turned and laid his hand on his granddaughter's shoulder. "Jinny," he said quietly, "I reckon we mustn't judge too hard, but—well, I'm beginning to pity that girl."

SHE WEPT—NOT FOR HERSELF, AS FANCHON HAD DONE, BUT FOR WILLIAM

Virginia said nothing. She was afraid that her grandfather felt her trembling under his hand.

XX

WILLIAM CARTER spent the days after the shooting entirely alone in his office at the Payson Building. He slept there on the old couch, and for the most part ate there, Moses, the elevator-boy, running errands for him to the delicatessen store and then devouring the viands after he had brought them. For William ate practically nothing, though he drank a good deal.

Mr. Payson, who had found him once or twice in a state of stupor, called up Mr. Carter on the telephone the day before the trial.

"You'd better come over and see William," he advised. He's in no condition to do business."

Mr. Carter, who had just returned to his office after a long talk with Leigh, was shaken; but he picked up his hat, clapped it down again on his gray head, and started determinedly for the Payson Building. He felt that his cup was full. He even experienced a sensation of ire at Payson for having acquired wealth to build this huge edifice of mottled brick and sandstone.

"Looks like a huge loaf of gingerbread," Mr. Carter grumbled to himself.

But he was glad that it happened to be in full blast, as he would have expressed it, and the throng of shoppers had no time to notice him. Moses took him up in an elevator that was designated as "for employees only." He made some ado, too, about moving aside a basketful of empty bottles to make room for his passenger. Mr. Carter shoved the basket with his foot.

"What's that?" he asked sharply.

Moses looked plaintive.

"Ain't had no time to pitch 'em out'n heah, suh. Dey's from Mist' Wilyum's room."

Mr. Carter restrained an impulse to count the bottles, and said nothing. At the eighth floor he got out and walked reluctantly across the hall to his son's door. He opened it without knocking and looked in.

William was seated at his desk, his arms hanging down at his sides and his eyes fixed on the wall opposite. There was no indication of intemperance, unless it lay in the deathly pallor and the disheveled hair. Mr. Carter strode over to the table and struck it loudly with his fist to call attention to his presence.

"We'd be honored if you'd come home," he said dryly. "You've nothing to fear there—she's cleared out."

William raised his haggard eyes.

"How about Leigh? I haven't seen Dan for days."

"Dan's trying to save his brother from" —Mr. Carter's voice grew suddenly hoarse —"from eighteen years' imprisonment."

"Good Lord!" cried William. "They couldn't do that—he's nothing but a kid!"

Mr. Carter walked over to the windows and shut and fastened them; then he picked up his son's hat and handed it to him.

"You come home with me," was all he said.

William went.

His adoring mother received him like the returned prodigal, and Emily waited on him with eyes red from weeping. No one mentioned Fanchon; the family seemed to have resolved to let her drop out of sight forever. With Daniel's aid, William managed to see Leigh that night for the first time since the shooting.

It was a moment of horrible embarrassment and humiliation for William. He was shocked, too, at the sight of the boy's white face and the dark rings under his girlish eyes. Leigh had gone through deep waters on his account, yet it was one of those things that cannot be talked about.

"My job, Leigh," he said laconically. "You had no business to take it away from me."

Leigh blushed like a girl.

"I couldn't hear Fanchon slandered like that," he cried. "I had to do it!"

William bowed his head, looking down at the floor of the cell. He hadn't the heart to tell the boy that he believed the slanders. Curiously enough, under Leigh's clear eyes, he felt ashamed of believing in them; but his inveterate rage against his wife remained undiminished. She had deceived him, he no longer believed in her, and he was furious against her for the ruin she had wrought. The very fact that he had been head over ears in love with her embittered him the more. It was an intolerable humiliation.

He left Leigh in a passion of sorrow and self-accusation, and went home to spend a sleepless night. Toward morning, from sheer exhaustion, he dozed off into troubled dreams. He thought he had been cast into a fiery furnace along with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; he could see three shadowy figures moving like giants through fields of flame. Presently an angel touched him on the shoulder and called to him—in French. The angel had the face of Fanchon.

He awoke with a groan and found his mother standing at the foot of his bed. She had recovered sufficiently to move about the house now in a striped calico wrapper that made her look twenty years older.

"It's the day of the trial, Willie," she said brokenly. "Papa and Dan went an hour ago. Are—are you going to testify? Dan said he wouldn't call you."

"The State will," replied William apathetically, getting out of bed.

His mother looked at him anxiously.

"I'm afraid they're going to call Fanchon," she faltered.

He started. For some reason he had never thought of this, and he felt a pang of horrid dismay. It couldn't be that Judge Jessup and Dan meant to do that. But the State? William experienced a new and rending sensation. He felt like a helpless beetle pinned to the board of a naturalist; he couldn't escape public dissection.

"Perhaps you'd better not go, Willie," suggested his mother fondly. "Emily and I are going to stay here at the telephone to-day. Papa promised to phone us everything, and we shall be terribly nervous and frightened. Stay with us, dear."

William realized that he was still a boy to her, and that now, when his unacceptable wife had left him, he was nearer than ever. Nevertheless, he began to look for his clothes.

"I shall go straight there, of course," he said sharply. "Please tell Miranda I want only a cup of hot coffee."

"Oh, Willie, you must eat something!" she cried tearfully. "You'll ruin your health—there are corn muffins, too."

He had always had a weakness for corn muffins, and, acting on the advice of Miranda, his mother had ordered them to console him. But William would none of them. He was dressing rapidly, in a fever of impatience, when Emily arrived outside his door and put her lips close to the key-hole to shout to him:

"Papa says you needn't hurry down there. He doesn't think they'll get a jury until next week. Dan's used up one panel already."

William had not thought of this, and he slackened his efforts a little only to hear his sister's return.

"Mama says stay and have some muffins. They're lovely and brown—I ate five."

The fact that murder in the second degree did not carry the death sentence had restored Emily's appetite. Like Miranda, she ate to keep up her spirits.

William swallowed a cup of coffee, and left with the consciousness that his mother, Emily, and Miranda considered him on the verge of suicide. He made his way to the court-house by the church lane and the rear alleys. Public curiosity had become intolerable to him, and he had a horror of meeting an acquaintance.

It seemed only last week that he had brought Fanchon up the train platform to meet his father. He had been proud of her beauty then; he had thought her unique and fascinating, and he had even liked the sensation she made in the old humdrum town. Now, he could not think of her without a shudder. He felt as if she had pilloried him in the public square. He would never be able to endure the place again, nor the people in it. It was too small. Each man knew all about his neighbor's business. He remembered hearing Judge Jessup say that he found it hard to live in such a "nosey" community. It even filled William with intolerant wrath when a group of little piccaninnies stopped playing to gaze, and he heard the loud whisper:

"Dat's him!"

The husband of the woman for whom Corwin had been shot!

He plunged desperately into the basement of the court-house, and ascended the marble steps to a pair of swinging baize doors labeled in huge letters:

CRIMINAL COURT No. 1.

The room, a large one at the northeast corner of the old building, was crowded to suffocation. The windows were all open, and from them one could see the sunshine on the broad leaves of the mulberry-tree in the quadrangle. Judge Barbour, a cousin of the doctor, was on the bench, and William recognized a group of reporters below him, on one side. On the other side Daniel was challenging a juror, his face tense and one long forefinger extended, pointing at the man.

William had not seen his brother in court for a long time, and he had a curious feeling that this white-faced, tense lawyer wasn't his brother at all. It seemed to him that there had been a metamorphosis, that some magic had been at work, that this wasn't lame Dan, the brother whom he had rather discounted. Here was a face so preeminently a face of power that William gaped at it, as the piccaninnies outside the court-house had gaped at him. He could feel, too, that Daniel was holding the crowded room, and that the men and boys on the window-sills, and out roosting in the mulberry branches that overlooked the court-room, were all drawn by the magic of his tongue.

Slowly, deliberately, using all his privilege of challenge, Daniel was picking his jury, while Judge Jessup, senior counsel for the defense, sat between Mr. Carter and the prisoner at the dock. Reluctantly, with a feeling of personal shame, William turned his eyes slowly toward his brother — the boy who was suffering vicariously for him.

Leigh's youth seemed appalling in that place. The boy, with his white face and his dark-ringed eyes, looked fifteen. He had a long lock of light brown hair that was usually tossed back from his white forehead—a Byronic effect that Leigh secretly cherished. It was hanging down now, limp and disheveled, and he kept clutching at his necktie with nervous fingers; but there was a light in his eyes, a singular light, as if he saw something inspiring and beautiful.

William tried to follow his glance, to discover what had inspired that rapt look, but the crowd was so great that he could not even get through it to sit beside his father. He found standing-room near the door, where he seemed to be unnoticed, and watched the proceedings with a growing feeling of shame that he was not in Leigh's place.

Daniel was engaged now in a tilt with the commonwealth attorney, Major Haskins, a man who William knew had once quarreled with his father, and who was known to be

vindictive. Haskins was flushed and excited, declaiming loudly, while Daniel, keeping his temper admirably, scored again and again. It was the case of a skilled toreador baiting a bull. Major Haskins, like the finest bulls in the arena, charged in a straight line, never swerving, and, like the toreador, Daniel dodged lightly on first one side and then the other, parrying the attack, but goading the enemy.

Something in the extreme dexterity of the goading surprised William again. "I didn't know Dan had it in him," he thought with an accession of unexpected pride in this taciturn brother, who had suffered so long and so silently. Then he heard an excited whisper from a woman in front of him.

"WE'D BE HONORED IF YOU'D COME HOME," HE SAID DRYLY. "YOU'VE NOTHING TO FEAR THERE — SHE'S CLEARED OUT"

"There she is—the dancer! Look—over to the right—they say she's going on the stand!"

William shrank as if from a blow, and his sensitive egotism shivered. This, then, was to be his crowning humiliation, this crowd gathered to stare at his wife!

Of course Leigh had been looking at her; he might have known it. The boy was a fool about her, as he himself had been a fool. William felt an unbearable sensation of suffocation; the air of the crowded room was unfit to breathe. People had found him out, too. The companion of the woman who had whispered so loudly had spotted him. They were looking over their shoulders and discussing the sensation of the hour in audible undertones.

"That's her husband—back there."

"Not really? Oh, my—"

"Say! Pull Jenny's dress—"

"She'll want to see him."

William turned, pushed past the men in the doorway, and almost staggered into the corridor. It was absolutely empty. Every living soul who could squeeze into the courtroom had done so. A short flight of marble steps descended to a door which opened on the quadrangle, and he could see the sunshine on the lowest step. He started down, bent on escape, and came face to face with Colonel Denbigh.

The old man, attired in a light gray summer suit, with a white waistcoat and a broad straw hat, looked like the personification of an untroubled conscience. He held out a friendly hand.

"How are you, William? I came down to "—he hesitated and smiled gravely—" to give your father and Leigh my moral support. Can't seem to do anything else just now, can I? Anything for you?" he added, after a moment's further hesitation.

William shook his head, turning a deep red.

"I ought to be in Leigh's place," he said chokingly, "but I'm worse off."

The colonel gave him a keen look. It was impossible not to see that the young man's position was heart rending, and he pitied him. At the same time he still felt a righteous indignation against Fanchon's husband.

"By gum, it serves him right," he thought.

"I OUGHT TO BE IN LEIGH'S PLACE," HE SAID CHOKINGLY, "BUT I'M WORSE OFF"

Then he was so ashamed of himself that he shook hands with William again. There didn't seem to be anything else to do.

"I'll go in and sit by your father—if I can get there," he said kindly. "I hope your mother's better. Bearing up, eh?"

"She's better," said William thickly, averting his eyes. "It's intolerable to me, Colonel Denbigh, that she should have to suffer so about Leigh on my account. If the boy had only come straight to me!" he added with suppressed passion, his lip quivering suddenly like a woman's on the verge of tears.

The colonel nodded his head thoughtfully.

"I know—but it's spilt milk, William. We'll hope for the best. They tell me Dan's a smart fellow. Going to be the best lawyer in this town, Judge Jessup says. He'll get his brother off."

"That won't save my face," William replied bitterly, plunging abruptly down the steps and out into the quadrangle.

The colonel, left alone, stood a moment looking after him, considering him. Come to look at it, he thought, it was a pretty bad place—even for a lummox. He had always thought well of William, he had once imagined him as the possible husband of Virginia, but now—

The colonel looked grim and tugged at his mustache. He was thinking of Virginia's face on the stairs, the sadness of that profile.

"It can't be that Jinny cares!" he cried indignantly under his breath.

Then, unable to endure the idea, he swung open the baize doors and worked his way into the crowded court-room. There was a little stir in it now, an air of relief. The twelfth juror had just been accepted.

XXI

THE trial dragged its way through the rest of the afternoon and all the next day,

the colonel sitting dutifully beside his good friend, Johnson Carter. The old man leaned forward on his cane, an interested spectator, hoping in his heart that he was thus killing off any gossip about that old attachment between William Carter and his granddaughter. It was from him that Virginia got her news of the proceedings, and an account of Daniel as a lawyer.

"Say, Jinny, that boy's as smart as a steel trap," said the colonel delightedly. "If William had had half his gumption, he wouldn't be in the fix he's in now. You ought to see Dan get a jury. By gum, I had to laugh at the way he got Haskins on the hip every time! Got the indictment in the second degree, too, Jessup says."

"It would have been terrible to try that boy for murder in the first degree," said Virginia. "Why, grandpa, I don't believe Major Haskins would do it."

"Jinny, Haskins would indict his own grandmother for grand larceny if he thought it would get him a seat in the Legislature," retorted the colonel with asperity. "I reckon I know Jim Haskins!"

At which Virginia had to laugh; but she felt very little like laughing as the trial dragged on. She went over twice to carry flowers and what comfort she could, to Mrs. Carter and Emily. The last time she regretted it, for Mrs. Carter lost her head and sobbed on the young comforter's shoulder.

"Oh, Jinny, if William had only married you!" she gasped.

Virginia went away with a red face. It seemed to her that the thing pursued her whichever way she turned. The rest of that day she devoted to close attention to the household affairs.

"I sha'n't be home until late, Jinny," her father phoned her during the afternoon. "I reckon it 'll go to the jury to-day. Say, Jinny!"

"Yes, grandpa, I'm listening."

"Mrs. William Carter's going on the stand. Jinny, the court-room's packed, just like sardines in a box. They're sitting on the window-sills this minute. Don't you wait dinner if I'm late."

Virginia hung up the receiver with a pale face. She had heard an account of William in the corridor from her grandfather, and she had divined how William felt.

The old man's robust anger against "that lummox" for spoiling his own life did not reach Virginia. She remembered William's boyish figure trudging home from school with her books, William reading the "Iliad" with her, and William, when he told her that he loved her. It had all been a youthful affair. She knew that, so she told herself; but she could never quite forget it when she thought of him. She thought of it now, and tried in vain to picture him sitting there, helplessly, and hearing all the whispers and gossiping when his wife went on the stand to try to save his brother—for such a cause!

Virginia, who had been standing by the telephone, walked slowly across the room to a window that overlooked the town. It was a spot that showed the old place in its most homelike and friendly aspect, with its wreath of foliage—now, in midsummer, at the full height of its beauty—and its back ground of lovely hills. She could see from here the long gable of Dr. Barbour's roof, and over there the chimneys of the Paysons' more pretentious mansion. Behind the tall poplars was the Carter house, and yonder the cross-tipped spire of the church. Beyond these she caught a glimpse of a distant cupola, and knew it to be the apex of the court-house. A pleasant, warm haze hung in the summer atmosphere, and she could hear the tinkling bell on a passing pedler's cart.

Virginia tried not to think. She did not want to think of William watching his wife go on the stand for such a cause; but as she leaned forward, her hands gripped the window-sill until the knuckles whitened.

She was still there when Lucas came driving back from town. He had taken the colonel to court in an antiquated rockaway that belonged in the family. He was returning alone now, with a number of bundles in the rockaway, topped by a large, ripe watermelon. Virginia watched him drive in the gate and on to the stables.

Presently he came along on foot, with his watermelon on his shoulder. Virginia called to him.

"Where did you get your melon, Lucas?"

"Presen' fo' de col'nel, Miss Jinny." Lucas turned his shoulder around for her to look at the melon. "Ain't he a beauty? Sho' he is! Mist' Payson, he give him to me. He say: 'Luke, yo' take him to de col'nel fo' a presen'.'"

Virginia admired the melon.

"Grandfather isn't coming back until late," she said. "Did he tell you when to come for him, Lucas?"

"No, Miss Jinny, he ain't a comin' till it's over, I reckon. Yo' oughter see dat court-house! Ain't no gettin' inter it. Mis' Wilyum Carter, she testifyin'. Seems like it mus' be motion-picture show, Miss Jinny. I saw Mist' Wilyum Carter myse'f. He was goin' in ayonnah, an' he look—Miss Jinny, he look like one ob dese yere white-spine cucumbers—he ain't got no more colluh 'cept green."

"That's all right, Lucas. Take that watermelon down to the kitchen and get Lucy to put it on ice. The colonel may want it when he comes home."

"Yes, Miss Jinny, I sho' will. I's— Say, Miss Jinny, Mirandy, Mis' Carter's help, she done say Mist' Wilyum gwine to get divorcement."

"Never mind about Miranda," said Virginia hastily. "You get that melon out of the sun."

"He ain't gwine to get hurt in de sun, Miss Jinny. He's jus' ripe—yo' heah him?" Lucas gave the melon a scientific tap. "Yo' heah him? He's all right, he sho' is, Miss Jinny. Mirandy, she say Mist' Carter—de ole man—he raise ruction 'bout it when Mist' Leigh shoot dat man—"

"Lucas," said Virginia, "I never listen to gossip. You take that melon to the kitchen!"

"Yes, Miss Jinny, yes, miss, I's goin', but Mirandy—"

Virginia thrust her fingers in her ears and retreated. Half laughing, half crying, she threw herself into a chair beside the piano. Her heart was beating stormily, and she hated herself for it. Then she lifted her eyes slowly, reluctantly, to the little picture of William as a child. It still hung beside her piano. The sight of it filled her mind with a strange tumult of thoughts; yet, strangely enough, the vision she saw most clearly was Daniel's face of pain as she stood beside him, her hand on his shoulder. She blushed at the thought of it now.

At that very moment, when Virginia sat with her eyes hidden in her hands, trying to shut out the little tormenting imps that thrust that picture before her, a stranger scene was being staged in the old court-house. The court-room was so densely crowded that even the sweet summer air which came in through the open windows grew close and stifling. The window-sills were full, and the trees outside bore human fruit upon the branches that commanded the upper panes of those windows.

The crowd dimmed the light like a flock of locusts darkening the sun in the east, and some one had lit a green-shaded lamp on the recorder's desk. The light from it flared up on the face of the prisoner—a pale, boyish face with girlish eyes. Near him sat his family. Mrs. Carter had summoned all her courage to be with her boy at the supreme moment, and Emily was there, too, with tearful eyes and a red nose, looking very unlike the Emily who had painted her lashes. Beside her sat William Carter, then his father and Colonel Denbigh.

William sat with his eyes down and his hands clenched on the arms of his chair. He never looked up, not even when Daniel and Judge Jessup scored a victory and got Mrs. William Carter's testimony admitted as being relevant to the defense. Bernstein had already told his story—a story of the scandal, and of Corwin's slanders.

Poor Mrs. Carter hardly dared to look up. She had a terrible sensation of sinking and falling through space, common to nightmare. William's wife talked about like that! She put out a groping hand, caught Emily's hot, moist fingers, and held them. They didn't dare even to look at each other, and Emily sniffed hard to keep back the tears. It was the first time she had heard the details.

The prisoner went white; he realized suddenly that his reckless act had given the scandal huge publicity, that it was ruinous to the woman whom he had tried to defend. Humiliation swept over him, and he sank down in his chair, staring straight in front of him. Like William, he did not look up when Fanchon was called.

There was an expectant stir, followed by a hush. A small figure in black, with a huge hat and a floating veil, came slowly forward and took the oath. Judge Jessup stepped gallantly aside, and Daniel Carter, very pale, very relentless, took the witness.

For the first time William looked up. He looked persistently at his brother, and seemed to be trying to avoid looking at his wife; but he was aware of her, even before she began to answer Daniel's terrible questions that seemed to drive straight into her past, to lay it open and set it, throbbing and pitiful and full of pain, before the jury, before the packed court-room, before the little world in which the Carters had always lived quiet and sober and respected.

At first William did not listen. He was filled with a blind fury that Daniel should

A SMALL FIGURE IN BLACK, WITH A HUGE HAT AND A FLOATING VEIL, CAME SLOWLY FORWARD AND TOOK THE OATH

do it, that his own brother should drag him out into public view as a young man who had made a fool of himself and married a dancer. Then her sweet, vibrating, captivating voice, with a French note in it and the spell of sex, reached him, and he had to listen.

First came the story of their marriage—he knew that; then the story of her birth and childhood—he knew that in part, and it was sad. The stillness in the room affected him. He began to feel the wave of sympathy rising. They liked her; she was winning them. Something stirred in his heart. His old passion for her was not yet cold, and that voice—that delightful, hurrying voice—he couldn't shut it out. Reluctantly he raised his eyes.

Row upon row of faces! He had never seen so many faces. He knew many of them. His old friends and his acquaintances were there, and strangers. Then he heard Daniel's voice, and it cut like a knife-thrust:

"And your first meeting with this man Corwin?"

William turned and looked at her then. The light from the little lamp on the recorder's desk was playing strange tricks. It caught Fanchon's face now and illuminated it—a face small and pale and piquant, with the eyes of a wild fawn, the adorable face that William had seen first in Paris—only a few months ago!

He gazed fixedly at it, breathing hard. The old spell laid hold of him, for she had turned and was looking at him. There was an appeal in that look, almost a cry for help, and it held him.

Then he heard her voice again, and he began to listen, in a dull way at first, and then with growing amazement, with rising fury. She was telling her story—her pitiful, sordid story. Women wept; but there was nothing touching in it to her husband. It was a revelation, a cruel, sordid revelation of a lie. She had deceived him!

Pity died in his heart, the spell broke, he leaned back in his chair with folded arms and regarded her coldly and scornfully and bitterly. His look worked upon her like something alien and fierce and inimical; and she broke under it. At the very moment when it seemed as if she had planned it to work upon the jury, Fanchon broke down—broke down into pitiful, passionate tears.

An hour later—after Major Haskins had tried in vain to destroy her story—Daniel rose in his place, and simply, eloquently, without gestures or oratory, he made the plea that won him fame—a brother's plea for a brother. So eloquent was it that Judge Jessup never spoke at all. There seemed nothing else to say.

Major Haskins summed up for the prosecution. He did it with acrimony, in the old way, tearing Fanchon's past to pieces and fairly pinning the Carter family, like a lot of butterflies stuck on the board of the cruelest of naturalists, and leaving Mr. Carter gasping with mute fury. Then, at a late hour, Judge Barbour charged the jury, and William Carter rose, white as a sheet, and left the court-house.

Virginia, having eaten her dinner in solitary state, sat on the piazza waiting for her grandfather. It was late in August, and the sweet darkness fell early. She watched the earth grow darker and darker until the hilltops stood out, etched in black against a pale sky. Behind her the old house was dark except for the light in the hall, and silent except for the occasional sound of mellow laughter from the kitchen, where the negroes awaited their share of Mr. Payson's prize watermelon.

Virginia sat very still as the night deepened. The air was full of delicate fragrance from the flower-beds below her feet. Far off at first, and then nearer at hand, the insects began their incessant clamor, which seemed only to make the stillness more complete by contrast. Above, the pale sky began to darken, and one by one the stars came out, softly obscured by clouds and shining through them, as the candles at an altar sometimes shine through a fog of incense.

Time passed; the old clock in the hall chimed. Virginia counted the strokes—ten. How late the colonel was! Then she heard the sound of wheels on the gravel outside the main gate, and Lucas drove the rockaway up to the front door. Her grandfather's tall head appeared at the steps. He stopped to say a word to Lucas and then came slowly up. Not until then did Virginia rise from her corner.

"Grandpa—is it over?"

He was startled; then he smiled, taking off his hat.

"How cool it is out here—we were baked down-town! I reckon I'll sit with you, Jinny."

"Have you dined? Mr. Payson sent a watermelon; it's on ice for you."

"I dined with Payson down-town. No, let the watermelon wait. What did you say, Jinny? No, it isn't over. We waited, but they've locked up the jury for the night, so I came home."

Virginia, who had dropped into her seat again, was trying to be calm.

"There's a disagreement, then?"

The colonel nodded thoughtfully.

"I reckon there is. Haskins made a big fight, Jinny, but"—the old man drew a long breath—"by gum, I've heard that girl's story — Fanchon's. She told it on the stand!"

He stopped, drawing a deep breath. He seemed to be contemplating something amazing. Virginia said nothing. She clasped her hands tightly in her lap, looking not at him but at the constellation in front of her. It happened to be the Scorpion, and she began to count the stars silently.

"By gum!" said the colonel again.

Plato came to the door.

"Have a julep, suh, or dat watermelon?"

"Nothing at all; I'm not hungry."

The colonel waved him away; then he turned to Virginia and told her Fanchon's story. He told it better than she could have hoped to have him tell it.

"She hasn't been a bad girl, Jinny. That was a relief to me. Haskins tried to slur her, but Dan brought it out point by point. Married at fifteen, and her old aunt swore that she was eighteen to get money out of it, by gum!"

Virginia, who had listened with emotion, shivered.

"I think it was cruel, grandfather, to make her tell it."

The old man nodded.

"Not to save Leigh, though. Lordy, Jinny, I never saw Leigh look younger, except that day I caught him with the lollypop. It ought to save him." He added reluctantly, with a fine sense of justice: "Jinny, I can't blame William. He got up and left the court. Mr. Carter told me about it. He never knew a darned thing about his wife being a divorced woman, nor about Corwin, nor anything. She lied to him, Jinny." The colonel leaned back and thrust his thumbs into the armholes of his waistcoat. "I'm kind of sorry for him. He's going to get a divorce, so they say; but the girl—Fanchon, I mean—she's tried to save Leigh, and she's about ruined herself. Jinny, I felt as if it was heroic. I—by gum, come inside, I can't stand those crickets to-night! They're on my nerves—shouting: 'Here again, here again!' Jinny, I'm sorry for them all, but I'm a darned sight sorrier for the girl!"

XXII

"Leigh's acquitted!" Judge Jessup, with a flushed face, bent over to whisper it to Mrs. Carter.

In the crowd and confusion of the courtroom she seemed too dazed to hear the foreman of the jury as he answered the judge's interrogation. She looked up at the old lawyer, her lip quivering like a child's.

"Oh, judge! Really and truly?"

He nodded, swallowing a lump in his throat, for Mrs. Carter collapsed, crying like a baby on Emily's shoulder, and Judge Jessup found it a moving spectacle. He had once had a devoted mother himself.

There was a crowd around Leigh, old friends and sympathizers, and—to Mr. Carter's horror—newspaper reporters. It made the perspiration stand out in beads on his forehead.

"Heavens, I should think we'd had enough without that," he groaned inwardly, and then he caught sight of his eldest son's face.

William was standing behind Leigh, his arms folded and his eyes down. It seemed to his father that he had never seen such wreckage in a young man's face before. It was as hard as flint. The square jaws were set and the brows bent. William had been drinking the cup of humiliation to the dregs.

"Serves him right," his father thought hotly, and then: "She's saved Leigh!"

That sent a thrill of remorse through him, and his eyes followed the line of reporters, which led, like a trail of ants after a dead beetle, straight to the small figure in black on the other side of the court-room. Mr. Carter, perspiring freely and with a sinking heart, beheld his daughter-in-law.

Fanchon was as white as William, but those lovely, fawnlike eyes were soft, appealing, almost childlike. She scarcely heeded the reporters. She seemed unwilling to speak to any one, and, as Mr. Carter looked at her, she began to make her way toward Leigh.

There was a little hum of excited comment as she moved, and the light grace and beauty of the small, black-clad figure had never been more marked. She wore the same big black hat, and her veil, floating from the wide brim, formed a shadowy background for the small, pointed face—the face that had never shown more fully than it did at that moment its subtle, tantalizing, inimitable charm. Mr. Carter saw it reluctantly, and Leigh saw it with boyish devotion as she came up. They said little. She gave both her small hands to the boy.

"Dear, dear Leigh!" she whispered, a sob in her throat.

"Oh, Fanchon!"

That was all he could gasp out, his eyes too misted to see the beauty of hers. Their hands clung together.

"Dear boy!" Fanchon murmured. "I can't thank you—you believed in me! I shall remember—*toujours, toujours!*"

He wrung her hands. Then some one else came up to speak to him, and she passed on.

Turning from Leigh, she came face to face with her husband. For a moment she seemed to hold her breath. In the crowd no one saw them but Daniel, who had just come back to sit by his mother and Emily. Fanchon stood still, and her hand went to

her side with an involuntary gesture of pain. For an instant she looked at William, but he never raised his eyes. He stood motionless, looking down. There was no sign that he was even aware of her, except a perceptible hardening of the mouth. She turned away blindly, dropping her veil over her face, and started toward the door.

Daniel pressed his mother's arm.

"Mother, you ought to thank Fanchon. She saved Leigh. It's been terrible for her."

"Me? Oh, I can't!" Mrs. Carter's lip trembled worse than ever. "It—it wouldn't do any good."

"Mother! Don't you understand? She saved Leigh!"

"DEAR BOY!" FANCHON MURMURED. "I CAN'T THANK YOU—YOU BELIEVED IN ME! I SHALL REMEMBER—TOUJOURS, TOUJOURS!"

Mrs. Carter started to her feet.

"Oh, Dan, I'll—I'll try!"

Daniel seized her arm and led her toward her daughter-in-law. They had to push through the crowd to a side door behind the witness-stand, for Fanchon had already reached it. Her veil was down, and, as Daniel spoke her name, she stood motionless, waiting. There was a difficult moment, and then Mrs. Carter's tremulous, frightened voice:

"Dan says you saved my boy—"

She stopped. Fanchon had lifted her veil with a tragic gesture and looked at Mrs.

Carter, passionate scorn in her beautiful eyes. For a moment she said nothing. Her whole form seemed to quiver from head to foot; then her pale lips moved, at first without words.

"I didn't do it for you," she said bitterly at last, "nor for your son, nor for any of you—only for Leigh! *Adieu, madame!*"

She turned with a gesture at once tragic and beautiful, the graceful gesture of an actress, made passionate by the bitterness of a woman.

"MOTHER, YOU OUGHT TO THANK FANCHON. SHE SAVED LEIGH. IT'S BEEN TERRIBLE FOR HER"

A bailiff held the door open for her, looking after her admiringly and curiously, but without deference. Daniel and his mother, watching her, saw the small black figure disappear down the long corridor, saw it silhouetted a moment against the daylight at some distant door, and then it was gone.

"Oh, Dan, take me home!" gasped Mrs. Carter. "I haven't done anything wrong, but I—I feel like a pickpocket. She makes me feel that way!"

Daniel made no reply. He was aware, at the moment, that his father, bent on getting Leigh home, was fighting his way out with the boy. Judge Jessup had phoned for two taxis, as one would not hold the reunited Carters.

"The jury couldn't agree at first," the judge explained joyfully; "but Fanchon's story did it. When they talked it over, they agreed that the proper verdict would be an acquittal. Good thing, eh?"

He tried to be jovial, for he saw the strain, and he was glad when the two loaded taxis disappeared in the dust of the high-road. It seemed to him that, as a family, they were not joyful.

"Willie looks like a death's-head at the feast," the old man thought, and turned to shake hands with Colonel Denbigh. "I didn't do it. No, sir, Daniel Carter did. He's the coming man. You watch him!"

Colonel Denbigh nodded thoughtfully.

"I'll back Dan," he said. "But how about that poor girl, Jessup?"

The judge pursed his lips.

"William's going to get a divorce. Do you reckon he realizes that she gave up

everything to save his brother? He's turning her out for it, eh? Looks that way, far as I can see."

"By gum!" said the colonel softly, and he averted his eyes.

There was a pause, and then the two old friends went silently over to the club for luncheon.

Meanwhile the Carters had taken Leigh home. Distributed in two taxicabs, they arrived in a state of suppressed emotion difficult to describe; but, once in the house, the ice thawed. Once more Mrs. Carter became hysterical, Emily wept on her brother's neck, and Miranda started in on a wild effort to make cherry tarts in time for lunch.

Awaiting this event, all the members of the family gathered in the library, sitting around Leigh in a semicircle and looking at him, much as they might have gazed at a wanderer rescued from the perils of some distant and unknown clime. Leigh, who had been thoroughly lectured by his father on the way home, looked limp and white. He sat in Mr. Carter's large chair and clung to the arms with his thin, white hands, the lock falling low on his forehead and the rims of his eyes suspiciously red. Mr. Carter, trembling with joy at his son's release, had nevertheless exploded with long-suppressed wrath.

"You've had a lesson now, young man," he had said hoarsely. "Mind you profit by it. If I catch you with shooting-irons again, I'm lam you for it."

Leigh, who had indeed had a bitter experience, had made no reply. He was aware of Daniel's significant silence on the other side. It was a painful moment, only alleviated by his mother's fond ecstasy and Emily's sobs. Those two, at least, were glad to get him back on any terms.

Now, in the library, he sat looking about at the family circle with a feeling of pitiful embarrassment. It was almost worse than sitting in the dock. He lifted his eyes reluctantly and found his father still explosive between relief and anger. His mother and Emily were sniffing, while Daniel was engaged at the table, making some notes.

In the corner, alone and morose, sat William. Leigh turned his eyes that way only once. He found his brother's haggard face unpleasant to look at. He sat again with his eyes down, moving one foot occasionally, or gripping nervously at the arms of his chair.

Miranda came to the door, her brown face wreathed in smiles.

"Lunch is ready, Mis' Carter, an' dem tarts came out right smart, yes'm!"

Mrs. Carter rose and laid her hand on Leigh's shoulder.

"Come, darling," she said fondly. "We've got some cherry tarts for you."

The boy rose awkwardly, and his mother led him along, clinging to him, doting upon him, while the rest of the family trailed in the rear. As they entered the dining-room, Leigh counted the places.

"Sit right down here beside mama," cooed his mother, patting the chair on her right.

Leigh stood with his hand on the back of his chair, and glanced questioningly up and down the table.

"Where's Fanchon?" he asked.

There was that kind of a silence that seems to be audible. It was Mr. Carter who answered him, frowning heavily.

"She has left us," he said shortly. "I wish you to know, Leigh, that—this family's done with her. Understand?"

Leigh caught his breath, and his mouth fell open. He stared at William, but William was looking down at his plate. The only sign he gave of having heard his father's remark was the flush that went up to his hair. Leigh remained standing, though his mother clutched at his sleeve.

"Sit down, dear," she whispered.

"Father," he said in his high, boyish voice, his lips shaking, "she saved me. Where is she?"

"Sit down," said Mr. Carter with an impatient gesture. "We'll talk of that another time."

He fixed an irate eye on his son, and the boy collapsed into his chair; but he scarcely tasted his food, nor did William eat more than a few mouthfuls. The two played with their forks and avoided looking at each other.

Leigh was panting with anger against William. He understood now what had happened. William was deserting Fanchon because of Leigh's act. Instead of protecting her, he had ruined her. The boy could not eat. Mrs. Carter hurried on the cherry tarts, and Miranda bore them in on a tray, her face beaming.

"Look, Leigh!" cried his mother. "Miranda made these for you."

The boy raised his shy eyes to the cook's face.

"I THINK WILLIAM'S A BRUTE," HE REMARKED IN A LOW VOICE. "SHE LOVES HIM—I KNOW SHE LOVES HIM, AND SHE'S HIS WIFE!"

"You're very good to me, Miranda," he managed to say.

Miranda, with her quick racial sympathy, nearly dropped the tray.

"I declar' to goodness if he ain't gwine to cry in those tarts fo' sho'!" she said to herself, and cast an anxious look at Mrs. Carter's troubled face.

At this juncture, William, who felt himself to be a death's-head at the feast, rose abruptly and left the room. A moment later the startled family heard the front door close behind him. Emily slipped out of her seat and ran to the window, coming back just as Miranda returned to the kitchen.

"He's gone to the Denbighs'," Emily announced in a stage whisper in her mother's ear. "I just knew he would."

"Oh, Emmy, hush!" Mrs. Carter said.

"He's gone there—I watched him," said Emily, helping herself to more cherry tarts.

More might have followed but for the fortunate return of Miranda. As she came

back, Daniel, having finished his meal, rose slowly and started for the door.

"Dan," said his father, looking around at him for the first time, "Jessup says you won the case. He thinks you're a great lawyer. I'm proud of you, my son!"

Daniel's face flushed; he understood the break in the older man's voice.

"Thank you," he said simply. "I'm sorry I had to do what I did."

His father nodded his head gravely.

"You finished her. It was a bit cruel, but it had to be done."

Daniel's flush deepened. He seemed about to speak, then hesitated and said nothing. They heard him slowly ascending the stairs to his room.

"He's going to be a great lawyer, papa," said Mrs. Carter with a flash of pleasure.

Mr. Carter nodded his head gravely, assenting, his eyes on Leigh.

Daniel went heavily up-stairs to his room. He tried not to think of what Emily had said, but he couldn't shut it out of his mind. His thoughts kept hovering back to it, like wretched singed moths making their last fascinated plunge for the flame of the candle; the plunge that was sure to take their remaining wings off.

He shut the door of his room and walked slowly across to the window opposite. He had had this room from his boyhood. At first he had shared it with William, but the elder brother had been promoted to a better apartment when he began to succeed at Payson's. Through long months of illness, after the fall that lamed him, Daniel had remained in the small upper room where the slant of the gable made a queer triangle that couldn't be decorated. The furniture was simple enough and rather sparse, but he had put up some book-shelves for himself, and they were well filled now with books on common law. Still hanging beside the bed was the picture of Virginia that he had taken from the library; but he did not look at it now.

He went to the window and opened the shutters wide, disclosing a square of sky where the white clouds floated; but he did not look up. In spite of himself he looked down. His window commanded a view of Denbigh Crossing, and involuntarily his eyes turned in that direction. He saw nothing but the thick foliage of a group of chestnuts, and the winding road disappearing under the arches of their wide branches.

He stood for some time looking gloomily at the prospect. He knew intuitively how his brother felt. William wanted to grovel in the dirt at Virginia's feet and beg her pardon; but would he dare to do it? Daniel remembered Virginia sitting at the piano with the childish face of William in its frame above her head. Daniel had never doubted that she loved his brother.

Then the scene in the court-room came back to him, and Fanchon's small, quivering face. It had wrung his heart to drag her story from her, even to save Leigh; but he had done it—without mercy, too. And now—

His thoughts broke off suddenly, for the door opened, and Leigh came in and shut it behind him. The boy was white and shaken. He put out an unsteady hand and clutched at the back of a chair.

"Dan," he said hoarsely, "what have they done to her? Where's Fanchon?"

Daniel laid a hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Sit down, Leigh," he said kindly.

The boy obeyed him awkwardly. He sat there staring at his own feet, unwilling to look at his brother.

"Leigh," said Daniel, "it's none of our business—it's William's."

"They've quarreled, and it's not her fault. You know it, Dan. We've all been dreadful to her!"

"I think you're right, Leigh, we have been; but there's another side to this. She wouldn't tell me where she was staying. She came to court for your sake, but she's done with the rest of us, Leigh."

Leigh flared up.

"Emmy says William's going to divorce her and marry Virginia Denbigh!"

Daniel went white.

"Emily has no right to say that." Involuntarily his hands clenched at his sides, but he gripped himself. "You've had a lesson, Leigh. You keep your hands off!"

The boy rose sullenly, his face still flushed.

"I owe her everything," he said.

"Not quite," Daniel retorted dryly. "You owe something to Judge Jessup and the jury."

Leigh seemed to be deaf to this. He went sulkily to the door and opened it.

"I think William's a brute," he remarked in a low voice. "She loves him—I know she loves him, and she's his wife!"

He went out and slammed the door.

(To be concluded in the February number of MUNSEY'S MAGAZINE.)

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